SPORTS: Sidenbender wins 500th game
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included inside

Niles Star

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Fernwood celebrates 50 years of 'Moon Tree' planting

By PMG STAFF

NILES — A piece of history from the Apollo 14 mission is celebrating 50 years of growth at Fernwood Botanical Gardens.

Fernwood's "Moon Tree," a sycamore, is celebrating 50 years of growth following its space mission. From Jan. 31 to Feb. 9, 1971, the sycamore's seed traveled with NASA astronaut Stuart Roosa. The saplings were planted to celebrate the U.S. Bicentennial in 1976. Roosa, an American aeronautical engineer, test pilot, U.S. Air Force pilot and smokejumper, or wildland firefighter who parachuted in to fight wildfires, brought a variety of tree seeds with him to space including Loblolly Pine, Sycamore, Sweet Gum, Redwood, and Douglas Fir. The project was to witness any differences between seeds traveling through space with those on Earth, between NASA and the U.S. Forest Service.

Fernwood's Moon Tree, a Sycamore (Platanus occidentalis), was planted adjacent to the Japanese Garden off the public pathway. It was intended to be a temporary location and was planned to be moved to the garden's 80-acre arboretum later. However, the tree grew quickly and thrived in its location, so it has remained there since April 1976.

The Horticulture Team at Fernwood is currently growing the next generation of Moon Trees, which will be available to the public in the fall.

Fernwood's Sycamore "Moon Tree" was planted in April 1976.
Photo provided

Edwardsburg approves sidewalk project bid

By JUSTIN FLAGEL
Leader Correspondent

EDWARDSBURG — The Edwardsburg Village Council approved a bid for the sidewalk project near the new Edwardsburg Branch of the Cass District Library along Main Street at their meeting on Monday. The bid from Abonmarche was approved for a total cost of $30,000.

It was reported later in the meeting that the new branch received 7,344 visitors in March and issued 292 new library cards. The Planning Commission also reported they are investigating methods to determine possible future uses of the old library building.

The council discussed a tree replacement program for residents impacted by tree removal, giving them the opportunity to choose from a variety of trees as replacements. The village intends to reach out to local experts to find the best fit for the village.

The new subcommittee for a possible change to the cannabis ordinance has begun their work, reviewing the existing ordinance. They will present their suggested amendments to the Planning Commission for approval, which will then be vetted by the Village attorney and voted on by the Village Council.

Edwardsburg is seeking a new electrical inspector, as the current inspector, Johnny Hamilton, is retiring as of June 1. The council discussed possible replacements and will be contacting them for introductions to the council and further review.

The council approved a payment of $631.99 to Cass Outdoor Equipment for a power sweep of the village and monthly payments of $10 to G.W. Jones in order to pay the Police Department via electronic transaction.

See **SIDEWALK**, page A6

Photos provided

On Sunday, April 19, Trees Across Berrien high school volunteers from Niles, Buchanan, Watervliet, and Berrien Springs who attend the Berrien Math and Science Center prepared 300 tree saplings for distribution and assisted the Berrien Conservation District with its annual tree sale at the Berrien County Fairgrounds in Berrien Springs.

Trees Across Berrien students deliver 300 saplings to area students for Earth Day

By PMG STAFF

NILES — Trees Across Berrien, a student-led environmental initiative, distributed more than 300 tree saplings this week to elementary school students in Buchanan, Berrien Springs and Niles as part of an Earth Day effort focused on conservation and community engagement.

According to Trees Across Berrien President and Niles High School freshman Samuel Lundberg, high school students and their families from the Berrien Math and Science Center participated in a Day of Service on Sunday, April 19, in Berrien Springs with the Berrien Conservation District during its annual tree sale.

See **EARTH DAY**, page A6

On Monday, April 20, Niles High School students Samuel Lundberg and Zarrah Dyer visited kindergarten classrooms at Eastside Connections in Niles, where they distributed tree saplings and read environmental books to students about the importance of trees.

Photo provided

A petition with more than 500 signatures calling for voters to reverse the charter township designation was presented Tuesday to township board members.

Residents submit petitions to reverse Howard Charter Township's 'charter' status

By DEBRA HAIGHT
Leader Correspondent

NILES — The Howard Charter Township Board's decision four years ago to become a charter township is getting fresh scrutiny and could be reversed if a group of township residents have their way.

Petitions with more than 500 signatures calling for voters to reverse the charter township designation were presented Tuesday to township board members. Petition organizer Chuck Bower presented the petitions at the end of Tuesday night's township board meeting. He said he and others had collected over 550 signatures from township residents over the last few months. A total of 267 signatures which represents 10 percent of the votes cast for supervisor are needed to place the issue on the ballot.

Bower gave some background on the reasons for the petition. He noted that the township board decided to start the process of becoming a charter township in early 2022 but never properly notified residents of the option to require a vote of the people to become a charter township.

See **HOWARD**, page A6

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Today's obituaries • Page A3
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Glena Rodgers
Pedro Soto

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Comics	B5	Home & Garden	C7	Television	D3

FRANKLY

Tips and quips

What is Frankly?
It is where readers sound off on issues of the day. Have a tip or a quip? Call Frankly at 269-687-7700 or email rich.cains@leaderpub.com.

■ Congratulations to Dowagiac's Top 10 Class. Your hard work is paying off.

■ It's sad to see that Niles Council Member Michael Thompson is up to his same old schtick. It's time for someone to represent more than just a tiny little sliver of the 4th ward.

■ Way to go Niles' FFA state champs. We are so proud of you.

■ Doesn't a data center increase the overall demand of electricity thus forcing up everyone's price?

■ Craft Night at Cass District Library was so much fun.

■ What can residents do to object to the Dowagiac data center? Is anyone organizing against it?

■ Hats off to Coach David Sidenbender on reaching 500 wins in baseball. Bobcat Nation appreciates you.

■ Just want to thank the tribe for supporting our City and pushing for transparency for the data center and helping to protect our people.

■ We cannot leave decisions to just a handful of people. We the people should have a vote on all things involving the changes that are being forced upon us.

■ Shout out to Buchanan softball coach Rachel Carlson. 400 wins and counting.

■ Plant some flowers and trim the weeds. A little water will help the seeds.

WEATHER

Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 68. East wind 5 to 10 mph.

Sunday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 49.

Kinexus sets employer lineup at job fair

Michigan Works Service Center to host event

By PMG STAFF

BENTON HARBOR — For the next Michigan Works hiring event, an estimated 25 employers will meet with candidates to fill their open positions.

According to a news release, the next event will take place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday, April 29 at the Michigan Works Service Center, located at 499 W. Main St. in Benton Harbor.

The list of employers includes Avid Health at Home; Centria Autism Center; Colson Group; Corewell Health; Elwood Staffing; Express Employment Professionals; Fifth Third Bank; First Student; Flowers Early Learning; Golden Shore AFC Facility; Lane Automotive; Ralph Moyle Inc.; Randstad; Telamon; and Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority by Via.

In addition to hosting employers in various industries, the job fair will also host resource providers to help jobseekers with education, training and support services. Attending resource providers includes the Berrien County Health Department; Corewell Center for Wellness; Educational Opportunity Center at Lake Michigan College; Midwest Truck Driving School/North Country Electrical Line and Heavy Equipment School; and the New Heights CCDA – Laundry Hub.

The last Michigan Works hiring event brought 17 employers and 191 jobseekers together, resulting in many on-the-spot interviews and filled positions. In addition to hosting employers in various industries, the job fair will also host resource providers to help jobseekers with education, training and support services. Coy's Keto Katering will be on site during the event.

Individuals who would like to participate should arrive at the job fair interview ready with an updated resume. Jobseekers are encouraged to pre-register their attendance.

Employers still have time to reserve a spot as well. Employers looking to have a table at the hiring event at no cost should contact Michael Mompremier at Mom premierM@miworks.org. Capacity is limited.

For more information or general questions, visit www.miworks.org/events.

Michigan Works of Berrien, Cass, Van Buren specializes in educating, training and employing individuals of all ages.

LMC secures $525K in grants to support mental health

By PMG STAFF

BENTON TOWNSHIP — Lake Michigan College has been awarded three grants totaling $525,000 to expand student support services and combat food insecurity across its Benton Harbor, South Haven and Bertrand Innovation Center campuses.

The awards come from two grant programs administered by the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential and one from the Ohio-Michigan Basic Needs Initiative.

The funding package includes a $400,000 Barrier Removal – Growing Institutional Capacity grant, a $75,000 Hunger-Free Campus Activities grant, and a $50,000 OH-MI Pathways Together Initiative grant. Together, the awards will allow LMC to launch new mental health resources, establish a centralized Community Resource Center, install smart food pickup lockers, expand its campus food pantry and snack shack network, create a meal-kit program, and build a more comprehensive infrastructure for identifying and responding to student basic needs.

"When students are struggling to meet basic needs, finishing a degree becomes much harder," LMC President Ken Flowers said in a news release. "These grants allow us to build the kind of proactive, connected support systems that help students stay enrolled and succeed."

The awards reflect LMC's sustained commitment to student success beyond the classroom. Utilization of the College's Red Hawk Refuel Pantry and Red Hawk Snack Shacks has grown 34 percent year over year, underscoring the urgency of investing in systems that keep students stable, enrolled, and on track to complete their degrees.

"For many students, the biggest threat to graduation isn't academics – it's life circumstances," said Dr. Beverly Walker-Griffea, MiLEAP director. "This funding helps colleges like Lake Michigan College put stronger systems in place so students can stay focused on their education and complete their degrees."

Edwardsburg teens injured in Porter Twp. crash

By PMG STAFF

PORTER TOWNSHIP — Two Edwardsburg teens were injured Friday following a single vehicle crash in Porter Township, according to the Cass County Sheriff's Office.

At approximately 7:45 a.m. Friday, deputies of the Cass County Sheriff's Office responded to a single vehicle crash on Bellows Road south of Sweet Road in Porter Township.

The investigation showed that a vehicle driven by a 16-year-old Edwardsburg teen was southbound on Bellows Road when he collided with a log in the roadway, causing him to lose control of his vehicle, hit a tree and overturn. His 19-year-old passenger, Gabriel Smith, was not wearing a seatbelt and was ejected from the vehicle.

Smith was transported by SEPSA EMS to Memorial Hospital. The driver was treated and released at the scene.

Assisting agencies on scene were SEPSA EMS, Newburg EMS and SEPSA Fire Department.

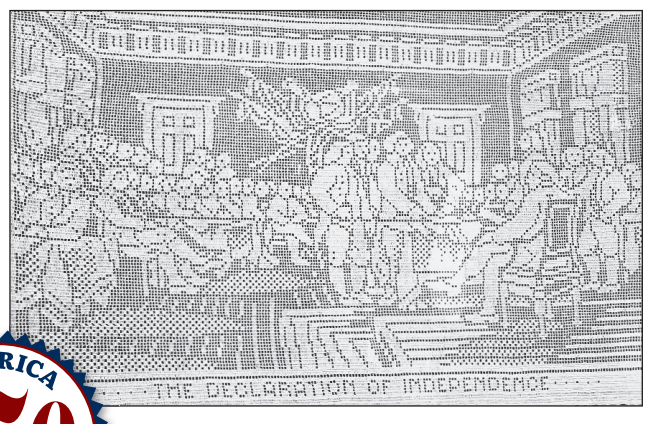
The crash remains under investigation.

Edwardsburg museum to celebrate America's 250 years

SUBMITTED

EDWARDSBURG — Elegance and simplicity describe filet crocheting which is front and center in the Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum's first display in 2026, in celebration of the nation's 250th anniversary.

The work is the Declaration of Independence, created by the late Lucille Brizendine (1928-2025) of Edwardsburg and Lawton. The 53-by-33-inch creation adorns the large bulletin board in the museum's gallery. Brizendine taught herself how to crochet as a young woman, and her farm home in Edwardsburg was filled with numerous crocheted doilies and bedspreads, for which she received several awards.



This filet crocheted piece by the late Lucille Brizendine of Edwardsburg can be seen in the gallery of the Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum in celebration of the nation's 250th anniversary in 2026. It is part of the first display of the season, "Riding and Writing for Liberty."
Photo provided

The opening display, "Riding and Writing for History," is running through July 25 and celebrates the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Brizendine's crocheted work shows it being signed in the Assembly Room of the Pennsylvania State House in Philadelphia, later renamed Independence Hall.

Several exhibit clusters make up the overall presentation, including patriotic-style memorabilia in two showcases.

The second exhibit, which runs from July 28 through Nov. 7, will capture the essence of "Thimbles, Thread and Tea." It will celebrate Betsy Ross, who stitched the first American Flag, and remember the Boston Tea Party, a political protest in 1773, that opposed taxation without representation.

The patriotic theme continues for the Christmas season with "Stars, Stripes, and Christmas Lights," which runs from Nov. 10 through Dec. 12. White lights on the 10-foot tree in the museum gallery will be boldly accented with red ornaments, blue ribbons, and American Flags. Smaller items of a patriotic nature will adorn the display cases.

The museum will close on Dec. 12 and re-open in April 2027.

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Alan Osmond, the eldest member of the Osmonds, has died at 76

By MARIA SHERMAN
AP Music Writer

Isaac Brekken
Alan Osmond performs during a taping of the Osmonds 50th anniversary show in Las Vegas on Aug. 14, 2007.

NEW YORK — Alan Osmond, the eldest member of the chart-topping family act The Osmonds, died Monday after decades with multiple sclerosis. He was 76.

According to a family spokesperson, Alan's wife, Suzanne Osmond, and their eight sons were with him at his home in Lehi, Utah, at the time of his death. Prior to his passing, Alan used a wheelchair and spent a week in intensive care before returning home Thursday on hospice.

A talented songwriter and performer, Alan Osmond helped write some of the Osmond Brothers' biggest hits, including "One Bad Apple," "Crazy Horses" and "Are You Up There?"

Born in Ogden, Utah on June 22, 1949, Alan Osmond's storied musical career began in the 1950s, when he and his brothers Wayne, Merrill and Jay formed a barbershop quartet. He was the oldest of the performing group and the third oldest of his siblings.

The brothers worked the state fair circuit in Utah until a visit to Disneyland led to a television debut on "Disney After Dark" in 1962.

The group became regulars on "The Andy Williams Show," where they made their name and forged their wholesome and peppy image, peaking as a quintet in the early 1970s, as younger brother Donny Osmond became the breakout star.

In 1971, the Osmonds tallied nine gold records, surpassing single-year bests by Elvis and the Beatles.

In the mid-to-late 1970s, Alan became a principal producer on ABC's hit television show "The Donny and Marie Show," starring his brother and sister.

The original Osmond Brothers – Alan, Wayne, Merrill and Jay – returned to the stage in 1982 as a country group and had a handful of hits, including "I Think About Your Lovin.'" At the time, Alan told The Associated Press he switched from recording rock to country music because it better fit their wholesome image.

"Country music really is the backbone of America," he said. "It doesn't just come and go. And we're kind of flag-wavers. You find that in the country area, too."

In 1987, Alan Osmond was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. It caused him to retire from performing with his family.

His brother Wayne Osmond died at the age of 73 in 2025 after suffering a stroke.

In a statement on social media Tuesday, Donny Osmond called Alan Osmond his "protector" and "guide," saying he was "the one who quietly carried so much responsibility so the rest of us could shine."

Merrill Osmond also paid tribute in a social media post, explaining that he saw his ailing brother two days prior.

"We talked as brothers do, heart to heart. He was struggling, but when I shared a joke or two, he found the strength to chuckle … and then he smiled," he wrote on Facebook. "I need you to know this … he has not left me. I have felt him. I have felt his quiet encouragement telling me to keep going … to keep building faith … to keep sharing light."

Alan is survived by his wife, Suzanne; his eight sons, Michael, Nathan, Doug, David, Scott, Jon, Alex, and Tyler; 30 grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, brothers Virl, Tom, Merrill, Jay, Donny, Jimmy and sister Marie.

Service plans are forthcoming.

Michael Tilson Thomas, renowned conductor and composer, dies at 81

By RONALD BLUM
Associated Press

Lynne Sladky / AP
Michael Tilson Thomas, founder and artistic director of the New World Symphony, appears during the grand opening ceremony of the New World Center on Jan. 25, 2011 in Miami Beach, Fla.

Michael Tilson Thomas, a leading American conductor for a half-century who headed orchestras in Buffalo, Miami, London and San Francisco while also composing, died Wednesday. He was 81.

Tilson Thomas had surgery for a brain tumor in 2021 and resumed his career, then said in February 2025 the tumor had returned. He conducted his final concert with the San Francisco Symphony in April 2025 and died at his home in San Francisco, spokesperson Connie Shuman said.

TILSON

Tilson Thomas received 39 Grammy Award nominations, winning 12, and was among the Kennedy Center Honors recipients in 2019.

"It's meant to have various intriguing and alluring, questioning things that you hear on first hearing," he said of classical music during a 2004 interview with The Associated Press. "But by its very nature it's holding a lot of other secrets or a lot of other perspectives much closer to its chest, which only with repeated hearing you start realizing are there."

Tilson Thomas was born in Los Angeles on Dec. 21, 1944, to a family steeped in the arts. His father, Ted, was a producer at New York's Mercury Theater Company, then worked in Los Angeles in the movie and television industry. His mother, Roberta, headed research for Columbia Pictures. His grandparents, Bessie and Boris Thomashefsky, were pioneers in American Yiddish theater.

He played piano at a young age and attended the University of Southern California. By the time he received a degree in 1967, he had worked with Pierre Boulez, Aaron Copland, Igor Stravinsky and Karlheinz Stockhausen.

"I don't fling the word genius around lightly, but I fling it around about Michael. He reminds me of me at that age, except that he knows more than I did," conductor Leonard Bernstein told The New York Times Magazine for a 1971 profile. "Not only music, but things like the functions of the brain, cerebrology, physics, biochemistry."

Bill Cramer / AP
Audrey Hepburn, right, appears with New World Symphony's artistic advisor Michael Tilson Thomas at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia on March 19, 1990.

Tilson Thomas was the co-music director and then music director of California's Ojai Festival in the late 1960s and early 1970s. He was an assistant at Germany's Bayreuth Festival in 1966, won the Koussevitzky Prize at the Tanglewood Music Center in 1968 and became a Boston Symphony Orchestra assistant conductor in 1969.

Tilson Thomas made his New York debut at Lincoln Center's Philharmonic Hall on Oct. 22, 1969, as a mid-concert replacement for an ailing William Steinberg. Tilson Thomas led Robert Starer's Concerto for Violin, Cello and Orchestra, and Strauss' "Till Eulenspiegel."

"A tall, thin young man, he came on stage with an air of immense confidence and authority, and showed that his confidence was not misplaced," critic Harold C. Schonberg wrote in the Times. "He takes naturally to this music, as might be expected of a Tanglewood graduate and a pupil of Pierre Boulez."

Tilson Thomas became the BSO's principal guest conductor from 1972-1974 and was music director of the Buffalo Philharmonic from 1971-79 and a principal guest conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic from 1981-85.

He helped found Miami's New World Symphony in 1987 and served as artistic director until 2021. He was principal conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra from 1988-95 and music director of the San Francisco Symphony from 1995-2020.

Tilson Thomas' compositions include "Grace" (1988), "Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind" (2015-16) and "Meditations on Rilke" (2019).

His husband, Joshua Robison, died Feb. 22 while recovering from a fall suffered last August. They met while playing in the orchestra of North Hollywood Junior High School (since renamed Walter Reed Middle School), became partners in 1976 and married in 2014.

In announcing his final concert would take place in San Francisco on April 26, 2025, in a belated 80th birthday celebration, Thomas issued a statement acknowledging his mortality.

"At that point we all get to say the old show business expression, 'It's a wrap,'" he said. "A coda is a musical element at the end of a composition that brings the whole piece to a conclusion. A coda can vary greatly in length. My life's coda is generous and rich."

OBITUARIES

Pedro Soto

Oct. 21, 2025 – April 16, 2026

Pedro Noel Soto, born Oct. 21, 2025, was just a week shy of 6 months old, when he passed away in the arms of his mother and father at Mott's Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor, MI on April 16, 2026. Arrangements have been entrusted to Newell Chapel in Decatur, MI.

Pedro brought so much joy. Although he never left the nicu, he left an imprint on everyone's heart who came into his life. All his nurses knew who the fierce Pedro was. Whatever he wanted, he got! Pedro recognized voices and loved when all the family would visit. We are very proud of how hard he fought and conquered.

The tiniest feet left the biggest imprint on our hearts. A life so small yet full of grace. A brief bright light, no time can erase. Forever our angel baby. Pedro will be received in heaven by his great grandparents Pedro and Patricia Villanueva, Nellie Gomez and his guardian angels.

Pedro is survived by his mother and father Amanda (Villanueva) Jose Soto Sr., his siblings – Izabella, Jose Jr., Juliana, Luna, and Soledad; his grandparents Beatriz and Jorge Villanueva, aunts, uncles and many cousins. Private Family services will be held.

Mary Coplen

Mary Alice Coplen, age 77, of Dowagiac, Michigan, passed away peacefully on April 13, 2026. Arrangements have been entrusted to Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Niles.

William Daniel

William Devaprasad Daniel, age 96, of Eau Claire, Michigan, passed away on April 20, 2026. Arrangements have been entrusted to Allred Funeral Home in Berrien Springs, Michigan. Services will be held at Allred Funeral Home on Thursday April 23 at 1 p.m. www.AllredFuneralHome.com.

Glena Rodgers

Glena Joan Rodgers, 73, passed away on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, in Niles, Michigan. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are pending with Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Jeff Amy / AP
Democratic U.S. Rep. David Scott speaks to reporters, March 4, 2024, at the Georgia Capitol in Atlanta.

Georgia Rep. David Scott dies at 80

By VALERIE YURK
CQ-Roll Call (TNS)

WASHINGTON — Democratic Rep. David Scott, a 12-term congressman representing Georgia's 13th District, has died. He was 80.

Combined with prior stints in the Georgia statehouse, Scott was in public service for over 50 years. He was first elected to the House in 2002 and became the first African American chair of the Agriculture Committee when he claimed the gavel for the 117th Congress, from 2021 to 2023.

Aside from the Agriculture panel, Scott also served on the Financial Services Committee.

"We are all deeply saddened," Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., said in a post on social media, adding Scott "spent the majority of his life in service to others."

"Under his leadership, Democrats fought to strengthen our agricultural communities, reduce hunger, and bring the American Dream within reach of everyone," House Minority Whip Katherine M. Clark, D-Mass., wrote on social media.

The news was announced on the House floor a few minutes after 1 p.m. Wednesday, bringing the whole number of the House to 430. Scott had voted on the floor the day before.

Scott leaves behind his wife, Alfredia Scott, two children and grandchildren. In a statement posted on social media, his office described his death as "unexpected" but did not provide further details.

Born in Aynor, S.C., Scott moved to Atlanta once he got his M.B.A. and started an advertising business, DaynMark Advertising. He also got involved in local politics, volunteering for Democrat Andrew Young's successful 1972 congressional campaign. Two years later, Scott won a seat in the state House, and he went on to serve 20 years in the state Senate.

In 2021, Scott worked to secure debt relief for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. He said at the time he wanted to support Black farmers who had lost land and generational wealth due to Agriculture Department bias that denied or delayed access to farm programs more readily available to white producers.

However, legal challenges plagued the program. It was eventually replaced in the 2022 reconciliation law with a provision that aimed to open up the relief to all USDA "distressed" borrowers.

"He was a strong voice for Georgia's farmers, hungry veterans and young people – who he helped shape into the next generation of agricultural leaders through his fierce advocacy for the 1980's Scholarship Program at historically Black colleges and universities," House Agriculture Committee ranking member Angie Craig, D-Minn., said in a statement. "The House Agriculture Committee will remember him for his strong faith, kindness and dedication to our nation's farmers and working people."

Scott's death comes just weeks before he faced a contentious primary to keep his seat, scheduled for May 19, after facing calls to "pass the torch."

Scott is the fifth member to die during the 119th Congress. It comes during a month of upheaval for the House, as two new lawmakers joined after winning special elections and three others resigned their seats. House Democrats now have 212 members, giving the slim Republican majority a little more wiggle room.

Eight indicted on federal drug charges after multi-agency raid last fall

By LOUISE WREGE
Paxton Media Group

GRAND RAPIDS — Eight people were indicted in federal court last week in Grand Rapids on drug charges stemming from months of investigation in Southwest Michigan, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office Western District of Michigan.

Six of the defendants were from Benton Harbor, one from Berrien Springs and one from Kalamazoo.

They join six other Benton Harbor defendants who were previously indicted in a related case.

The investigation started after agents learned a group of Benton Harbor drug traffickers were obtaining large amounts of methamphetamine and other drugs through third-party carriers from out of state.

For example, investigators seized more than 19 pounds of methamphetamine from a FedEx box delivered from California to Bangor on July 9, 2025.

That led to investigators executing 14 search warrants on Nov. 19, 2025, in Benton Harbor, Berrien Springs, St. Joseph and Kalamazoo, which resulted in the seizure of nearly a kilogram of fentanyl, more than 500 grams of cocaine, over $40,000 in cash and multiple firearms, according to the news release.

Berrien County Sheriff Chuck Heit said his office helped with the investigation and search warrants, along with the FBI, the Southwest Enforcement Team, Michigan State Police, the Drug Enforcement Administration and other agencies.

"That was wrapping up and picking up some of the people that had not been lodged before," Heit said when contacted Wednesday. "It's follow-up arrests from that original investigation. It's all tied together."

He said most of the funds his office used in the investigation were from the county's public safety millage. In addition to Berrien County staff who are members of SWET, he said the county provided its tactical response unit, three K-9s and nine rural patrol deputies.

Heit said it takes long-term investigations involving multiple law enforcement agencies working together to achieve these results.

"It's not something that a normal patrol officer would be able to put the time into to investigate," he said.

Heit said it's important to get drugs off the streets because it's illegal and leads to other crimes.

"It can lead to breaking into houses. Sometimes, they're doing that to support a drug habit," he said.

In the news release, Jennifer Runyan, special agent in charge of the FBI Detroit Field Office, said fentanyl, meth and cocaine continue to cause devastating harm in communities.

"We will not tolerate those who seek to profit from the distribution of these dangerous substances," Runyan said. "... We will continue our efforts to disrupt and dismantle individuals and organizations who distribute dangerous drugs in our region."

U.S. Attorney for the Michigan District of Michigan Timothy VerHey said this investigation shows the power of collaboration among law enforcement agencies.

"With the assistance of my office, various federal, state and local law enforcement agencies worked together to focus their efforts on disrupting the supply chain of some of the largest methamphetamine, fentanyl, and cocaine traffickers in Southwest Michigan," VerHey said in the news release. "We look forward to proving these defendants' involvement in the drug trafficking and money laundering beyond a reasonable doubt."

Indicted last week from Benton Harbor were Shawn Bernard Echols, 56; Anthony Lynn Lloyd, 54; Lamar Edward Sanders, 47; Keith Trayvon Curtis, 35; Lue Chanel Williams, 54; and Gregory Traylor, 47.

In addition, Lamont Roquinton Thomas from Berrien Springs and Adrian Linn Travier from Kalamazoo were indicted.

Traylor was charged with possession with intent to distribute fentanyl, heroin and cocaine. Williams was charged with conspiracy to commit concealment, money laundering and making a false statement.

The rest were indicted for conspiracy to distribute controlled substances.

Of the six people previously indicted, two pled guilty to attempted possession with intent to distribute methamphetamines. They were Michael Deanglo Scott, 32, and Michael Devontae Scott, 33.

The other four people charged with conspiracy to distribute controlled substances were Korey Demichael Ballard, 31; Charles Xavier Williams, 41; Deshun Lee Holmes, 38; and Demyron Lashun Robinson, 42.

These cases were investigated and prosecuted by the Michigan Homeland Security Task Force (HSTF) as part of Operation Lake Effect.

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Michigan House education budget bans sales of soda, candy at schools

By BETH LEBLANC and CRAIG MAUGER
The Detroit News (TNS)

LANSING — The Republican-led Michigan House's proposed education budget prohibits schools receiving state funding for breakfast and lunch programs from selling soda pop or candy on school grounds.

The $21.5 billion spending bill also bars certain ingredients in food served through the program, including bromated vegetable oil, potassium bromate, titanium dioxide and several food dyes.

State Rep. Tim Kelly, a Saginaw Township Republican who leads the House's K-12 budget process, said there is already a ban on the sale of pop and candy through the state-subsidized school breakfast and lunch programs. The language in the bill unveiled Tuesday would expand that ban to require schools to ensure pop or candy is not made "available for purchase to students" at other points of sale, such as vending machines in school buildings.

McMAHON

"I guess we're really trying to keep it out of their hands altogether in a school setting," Kelly said.

Kelly said the proposed ban on the sale of sugar-laden pop and candy inside Michigan schools is inspired by the Trump administration's Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) movement, which is being led by U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

"We know that these things lead to all sorts of chronic conditions, so why start them early?" Kelly said.

Sen. Darrin Camilleri, D-Trenton, said he was willing to discuss getting healthier foods in schools. But Camilleri said that he wasn't sure whether the House GOP plan was the right approach.

Jennifer Smith, director of government relations for the Michigan Association of School Boards, said she was uncertain how many schools sell candy or soda pop and which would be affected by the legislation. The bill does not appear to ban baked goods, she noted, which are also a source of sugar.

Smith noted that many school districts contract for food services, so meeting the ingredient requirement might be difficult.

"We're not making our food most of the time," Smith said. "Most districts don't have their own kitchen. It becomes hard for districts to regulate that."

The GOP-authored House bill was pushed Tuesday from a subcommittee to the full House Appropriations Committee, where it awaits a vote planned for Wednesday morning.

Both the House and Senate education bills, after they pass their respective chambers, will be subject to negotiations as the chambers work out a final budget for the 2027 fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1.

Michigan House Republicans, in their proposed Department of Health and Human Services budget, also included language that would exclude soda and candy from the list of eligible products individuals could buy with food stamps.

Several states have already been granted waivers under Kennedy's MAHA effort to prohibit the purchase of candy and soda with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) funds, formerly known as food stamps.

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Heavy rain on snow is testing aging dams across Michigan and Wisconsin

This is the future in a warming world

By RICHARD B. (RICKY) ROOD
Professor Emeritus of Climate and Space Sciences and Engineering, University of Michigan

Michigan and parts of Wisconsin are in the midst of a historic flooding event in spring 2026. Days of heavy rainfall on top of snow have sent lakes and rivers over their banks and threatened several dams in both states, forcing people to evacuate homes downstream.

By April 20, 2026, nearly half of Michigan's counties were under a state of emergency. In Cheboygan, Michigan, large pumps were brought in to lower pressure on a century-old dam in the city.

The region's aging water infrastructure was never designed for the volume of water it is facing. That's a troubling sign for the future, with flooding becoming more common as global temperatures rise.

In many areas, the damage has been exacerbated by a culture of building homes and cabins on the shores of inland lakes and along riverine lakes behind small, often privately owned dams. Many of these dams were built over 100 years ago, with some long forgotten.

I am a professor emeritus of meteorology at the University of Michigan whose work focuses on helping communities adapt to climate change. The warming climate is worsening the flood risk, and disasters like the one Michigan is experiencing are setting higher benchmarks for safety as communities plan future infrastructure.

THE CONVERSATION

Where is all the water coming from?

For much of Michigan and Wisconsin, as well as northern Illinois, 2026 has been the wettest March and April on record.

In March, much of that precipitation fell as snow, including in an enormous blizzard that brought 3 feet of snow to parts of Michigan. In mid-April, persistent rains began. The rain, on top of all that snow, sent floodwaters running into rivers, streets and homes. The water carries large amounts of ice that damages shores, infrastructure and homes.

The moisture for much of these storms has been funneled northward from the warm Gulf of Mexico, thanks in part to a high pressure system sitting over the southeastern U.S.

The problem of warming winters

The kind of flooding Michigan and Wisconsin are experiencing in 2026 is what forecasters expect to see more of as global temperatures rise.

Winters have been warming faster than other seasons across the U.S. In Michigan and Wisconsin, winter months used to be reliably below freezing, but that's changing. In the Cheboygan area, near the tip of Lower Michigan, March temperatures used to be below freezing on all but a few days. By the 1991-2020 period, the region averaged 10 days above or close to the freezing point – about twice as many as the 1951-80 period.

The air coming in from the south is also warmer than in the past. Nationally, 2026 was the warmest March on record in 132 years of record-keeping in the contiguous U.S., with an average temperature more than 9ºF higher than the 30-year average. So, in addition to snowmelt starting earlier, melting is happening faster.

Michigan's average wintertime temperature rose by more than 4ºF from 1951 to 2023. Though winter 2026 in Michigan was colder than the 1991-2020 average, the Gulf of Mexico, where the moisture originated, was warmer than average, accelerating the snowmelt.

How warming leads to downpours and flooding

A few aspects of a warming climate can lead to flooding.

First, temperatures are increasing. In higher temperatures, moisture evaporates faster from the ground, plants and surface water. That moisture, once in the atmosphere, eventually falls again as precipitation. However, for each degree Celsius that temperatures increase, the atmosphere can hold about 7 percent more moisture, resulting in more heavy downpours.

A warmer winter also means more melting snow and more rain-on-snow events that can quickly increase the amount of runoff into rivers.

The Great Lakes region and much of the Northeast already experience more precipitation than in the past. Winters with more persistent wetness – not just snow but also rain – prime the region for floods. With continued warming in the coming decades, 2026 might be among the least disruptive in the future.

Data shows that a scenario of persistent wetness, changes in winter and seasonal runoff is part of the future for Michigan and the other states and Canadian provinces along the Great Lakes Basin, as well as New England.

Fixing dams for the future

All of this means communities across the region will have to pay closer attention to the growing risks facing their vital infrastructure – particularly dams.

Even prior to the 2026 floods, Michigan had a well-documented problem with its aging inventory of 2,600 dams. In May 2020, an intense storm system that stalled over the region brought so much rain that the Edenville and Sanford dams both failed near Midland, Michigan, forcing 10,000 people to evacuate and causing an estimated $200 million in damage.

After that disaster, a state task force issued recommendations for fixing the state's water control infrastructure to meet the growing risks. But a member of the task force told The Detroit News in April 2026 that little had been done to address those recommendations.

Because warming will continue for the coming decades, the 2026 flooding should be considered at the lower end of capacity for stormwater infrastructure and dams. Rather than relying on the statistics that described floods in the past, planners will have to anticipate the floods of the future.

Michigan is often touted as a climate haven because it is relatively cool and has plenty of water. The state is not, however, immune to the amped-up weather of a warming climate. Environmental security in the future requires improved and more adaptive infrastructure.

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Court rules for Michigan in its fight to shut down an aging energy pipeline

By MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Wednesday sided with Michigan in ruling that the state's lawsuit seeking to shut down a section of an aging pipeline beneath a Great Lakes channel will stay in state court.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote for a unanimous court that the Enbridge energy company waited too long to try to move the case to federal court.

The case is part of a messy legal dispute about a pipeline that has moved crude oil and natural gas liquids between Superior, Wisconsin, and Sarnia, Ontario, since 1953.

Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel sued in state court in June 2019 seeking to void the easement that allows Enbridge to operate a 4.5-mile section of pipeline under the Straits of Mackinac, which link Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. Nessel, a Democrat, won a restraining order shutting down the pipeline from Ingham County Judge James Jamo in June 2020, although Enbridge was allowed to continue operations after meeting safety requirements.

Enbridge moved the lawsuit into federal court in 2021, arguing it affects U.S. and Canadian trade. But a three-judge panel from the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals sent the case back to Jamo in June 2024, finding that the company missed a 30-day deadline to change jurisdictions.

The pipeline at issue is called Line 5. Concerns over the section beneath the straits rupturing and causing a catastrophic spill have been growing since 2017, when Enbridge engineers revealed they had known about gaps in the section's protective coating since 2014. A boat anchor damaged the section in 2018, intensifying fears of a spill.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources under Gov. Gretchen Whitmer revoked the straits easement for Line 5 in 2020. Enbridge filed a separate federal lawsuit challenging the revocation.

Enbridge won a ruling from a federal judge blocking the move, but Whitmer, a Democrat, has appealed to the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. In March, the Supreme Court rejected Whitmer's appeal claiming that she couldn't be sued in federal court.

It was unclear how the federal ruling blocking Whitmer's revocation attempt would affect Nessel's case in state court. The company said in a statement that the judge in the Whitmer case has already decided federal regulators, not the state, are responsible for Line 5 safety and they have found no issues that would warrant shutting it down.

Rahmat Gul / AP

The U.S. Supreme Court is seen in Washington on April 3.

But Nessel said the case is far from over. "This unanimous ruling from the United States Supreme Court makes emphatically clear that our lawsuit against Enbridge belongs before the state court, where we've argued since 2019 that Line 5 does not have a legal right to the Straits bottomlands," she said in a statement.

Enbridge also is seeking permits to encase the section of pipeline beneath the straits in a protective tunnel. The Michigan Public Service Commission granted the relevant permits in 2023, but a coalition of environmental groups and Michigan tribes has filed a lawsuit seeking to void state permits for the tunnel. The state Supreme Court is weighing that case.

Enbridge also needs approval from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy.

The pipeline is at the center of a separate legal dispute in Wisconsin as well. A federal judge in Madison last summer gave Enbridge three years to shut down part of Line 5 that runs across the Bad River Band of Lake Superior's reservation. The company has appealed the shutdown order to the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, but it started work in February to reroute the line around the reservation.

The Bad River and environmental groups have filed a state lawsuit seeking to halt the work, arguing regulators have underestimated the damage the reroute construction will cause. That case also is pending.

Berrien County approves road projects

Cornerstone Alliance pledges $1.75M to rebuild Yore Avenue

By JULIE SWIDWA
Leader Correspondent

ST. JOSEPH — The Berrien County Board of Commissioners on Thursday approved contracts for road projects that will be funded, in part, with grants and donations.

Cornerstone Alliance has pledged $1.75 million toward reconstructing part of Yore Avenue, with the Berrien County Road Department contributing $151,255 toward the project. Estimates and a bid for the project came in at just over $1.9 million.

The county board approved a memorandum of understanding, accepting the contribution from Cornerstone Alliance.

The project will provide 1.1 miles of new road that will service local businesses and residents, according to a resolution approved by the board.

Reconstruction of the road, which commissioners said is currently in poor condition, will be on Yore Avenue from Napier Avenue to Townline Road and is expected to promote growth and development in the area.

The county board also approved contracts with the Michigan Department of Transportation for two other projects.

One involves resurfacing Red Arrow Highway from about 1,000 feet south of the Cook Nuclear Power Plant to the south village limit of Stevensville.

The project will involve converting the road from four to three lanes and include trenching, drainage improvements, hot mix asphalt for a shared use path along the road, concrete curbs and gutters, concrete ramps, a guardrail, modernization of signage in the area, lighting and pavement markings.

The other project involves construction of a shared use path along Red Arrow Highway from about 1,200 feet north of Willard Avenue, northerly to about 700 feet south of Johnson Road.

This project will include pavement removal, earthwork, trenching, drainage, concrete curb and gutters, curb ramps, guardrails, accessible pedestrian signage, push buttons allowing for a crossing system, and permanent pavement markings.

The total cost of both MDOT projects is estimated at just over $6.2 million, with MDOT covering a little over $4 million and the county road department funding the remaining $2.1 million.

The MDOT funding is through the federal Surface Transportation Program and Transportation Alternative Program.

Contact: jswidwa@thehp.com, Twitter: @HPSwidwa

EARTH DAY

From page A1

Student volunteers bundled trees for school distribution and assisted with preparing inventory for the public sale.

"Over the past five years, Trees Across Berrien and Math and Science Center students have distributed more than 1,400 trees to schoolchildren in communities across Berrien County, including Niles, Berrien Springs, Edwardsburg and Watervliet," Lundberg said. "I'm proud to lead this effort and continue the tradition of making sure we do our part to preserve our beautiful Southwest Michigan environment."

Lundberg also expressed gratitude for the ongoing partnership with the Berrien Conservation District, which has helped make the annual distribution possible.

"We couldn't do this without the support of the Berrien Conservation District and appreciate our partnership to help get trees sapling out to elementary children in our area and teach them the importance of trees to our environment."

As part of the initiative, Lundberg and Niles High School classmate Zarrah Dyer visited kindergarten classrooms at Eastside Connections in Niles, where they handed out saplings and read environmentally themed books to students, teaching the importance of planting and caring for trees.

"Each tree sapling comes with a message about the importance of helping our environment," Lundberg said. "It's really fun teaching younger students that regardless of their size, everyone can do their part."

In total, 129 trees were distributed to second-grade students at Moccasin Elementary in Buchanan; 45 saplings to kindergarteners at Eastside Connections in Niles; 51 to students at St. Mary School in Niles; and 80 saplings were delivered to Trinity Lutheran School in Berrien Springs.

STUDY

Nitrate contaminates water of millions of Americans

By KEVIN HARDY
Stateline.org (TNS)

Nearly one-fifth of Americans relied on drinking water systems with elevated and potentially dangerous levels of nitrate in recent years, according to a new study released Thursday.

The nonprofit Environmental Working Group examined test data collected by water systems across the country between 2021 and 2023, the most recent data available.

Water systems serving more than 3 million people exceeded the federal safety limit of 10 milligrams per liter over the three years, the research and advocacy organization found.

The analysis also found that thousands of water systems serving more than 62 million people reported nitrate levels above 3 milligrams per liter at least once during those years, which indicates human-caused drinking-water contamination.

Researchers are increasingly questioning whether the federal threshold should be lowered as more studies find links between even low levels of nitrate consumption and cancer and birth defects. Federal law limits nitrate levels in drinking water because of its association with blue-baby syndrome.

Nitrate is a natural component of soil, but has become a growing problem for drinking water systems because of crop farming's use of nitrogen fertilizers and runoff of nitrogen-rich manure from livestock operations.

States with big agricultural industries recorded more reports of elevated nitrate levels. In fact, the report found that 64 percent of all water systems that recorded nitrate levels at or above the legal limit were in just five states: California, Texas, Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma.

But Anne Schechinger, the organization's senior director of agriculture and climate research who authored the report, said the issue affects urban and rural areas alike.

"A lot of people have this idea that this issue is just a rural issue for small towns near farms. But we found with this analysis that that is not just the case," she told Stateline. "Based on how watersheds work, you can live very far from a farm and still be drinking water contaminated with nitrate."

The analysis relies on public records obtained from public drinking water systems in every state except New Hampshire, where data was not provided, she said.

SIDEWALK

From page A1

Trustees set a public hearing for 6:15 p.m. Monday, May 18 during the regular May Village Council meeting for special assessments related to delinquent water and refuse bills in the village. Those in question will be given the chance to speak before the assessments are added to their summer taxes.

After receiving approval by the village attorney, the council approved the transfer of the marijuana license for Dr. A's Re-Leaf Center. The new owner has received state approval and has entered into a five-year lease agreement with the building owners.

HOWARD

From page A1

The township board ended up voting to become a charter township without a public vote in April 2022. Bower pointed out that most residents weren't aware of the change until two years later when new signs going up stating Howard is a charter township and when board members levied a higher millage for township services.

Tuesday, Bower called it "taxation without representation" as residents weren't aware that millage rates could go up without them having a say in the matter. A charter township can levy up to five mills without a public vote, while a general law township which Howard had been can only levy one mill or less without a public vote.

He said that this is the first chance residents have had to reverse the charter township resignation as state law says that it can only be done after four years and every four years thereafter.

The submitted petitions will now be checked by Township Clerk Sheri Wozniak to make sure there are enough valid signatures and then sent to Cass County for approval to be placed on the Aug. 4 ballot.

The petition language states in part that "We the undersigned qualified and registered electors, residents in the Township of Howard, in the County of Cass, State of Michigan respectively petition for the question of disincorporating Howard Charter Township, Michigan back to a general law township … be placed on the ballot of the next general or special election for approval or rejection."

Some of the arguments for and against being a charter township were made Tuesday night as Bower and board members exchanged in a brief back and forth on the issue.

Board members cited the protections provided by being a charter township such as a protection from annexation by the city of Niles. "Why should we go back?" Township Trustee Hank Johnson asked.

Township Treasurer Mike Gordon called the petitions and the mailings being sent out by Bower's group "a bunch of lies."

"You don't want to see any improvements in the township, you want to go backwards," he said.

Trustee Gary Conover added the township would lose over $1 million a year in tax revenue if they went back to being a general law township. He noted that the board's actions in 2022 had been approved by the township attorney.

Bower responded by saying that taxpayers have lost over $1 million because of what he called the township board's illegal actions in becoming a charter township without a vote by the people. He said the township had violated state law provisions about charter townships as well as the Open Meetings Act.

He noted after the meeting that if being a charter township is so advantageous there would be more of them in the state. He said that only 143 townships out of 1,240 townships in the state have taken the steps to be charter townships.

Township Supervisor Bill Kasprzak did not attend Tuesday's board meeting. He said earlier that being a charter township has protected Howard from having land annexed by the city of Niles. He also said that it has allowed the township to levy extra mills to pay for fire protection as the township does not have a separate fire millage.

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Trump's wage cut for foreign labor is a gift to American farmers

By ALICIA A. CALDWELL and ELIYAHU KAMISHER
Bloomberg News (TNS)

Chandan Khanna / AFP via Getty Images / TNS
Migrant workers work on a farm in Homestead, Florida, on April 25, 2025.

Joe Petrocco, a fourth-generation vegetable farmer in Colorado, is facing one of the toughest seasons he can remember, with rising costs for fertilizer and fuel as well as a looming water shortage after a dry winter.

But one part of his business is providing some optimism: As farms like his across the U.S. get going on the planting and harvesting seasons, when the need for workers spikes, the cost of immigrant labor is set to drop. The cut could be more than $5 an hour in some places, reducing pay by a third. That's thanks to a Trump administration move to lower minimum wages for foreign farmworkers who come to the U.S. legally on temporary H-2A visas.

"We've been under such a tight squeeze," Petrocco lamented in a recent interview. Since the U.S. launched its war in Iran, prices for fertilizer and diesel have soared about 50 percent. The relief on labor costs won't fully offset the other tailwinds for his 3,000-acre operation, which grows spinach, cabbage, onions, green beans and sweet corn among other crops, but it's a welcome break. "It's significant," Petrocco said.

As Donald Trump fulfills a campaign pledge to crack down on almost all forms of immigration – from undocumented crossings to foreign university students to H-1B visas for highly skilled professionals – his aggressive enforcement is creating labor shortages in industries ranging from construction to fast food. But the president is going the opposite way on farms by keeping the path for temporary workers open.

Trump, who has frequently boasted about his support among farmers, hosted growers at the White House shortly after he began his second term, telling them, "You voted for me. I will never forget that." As raids swept through Southern California last year and temporarily led to an increase in absences at some agriculture work sites, the president vowed to "protect our farmers" and suggested at various points that he's sympathetic to their need for immigrant workers.

His gift comes after U.S. growers and their lobbyists have been pushing for change around the H-2A visa program for years, arguing onerous rules made it too cumbersome and expensive to hire temporary seasonal workers. The changes could also aid Trump's pledge to ease the cost of living. Food has been one of the top drivers of inflation, and lowering farmers' costs could help keep a lid on prices, a big voter issue in 2026 midterms with control of Congress in play.

The changes approved by the administration last year go beyond reducing pay – they also include a provision allowing employers to effectively charge workers for housing, which previously they had to provide for free.

Under the new wage rules, nationally farm workers stand to lose between $4.4 billion and $5.4 billion annually, according to an Economic Policy Institute estimate.

Daniel Costa, director of immigration law and policy research at EPI, said the wage cuts appear to have a dual intent: help American farmers find cheaper labor, thus making it easier for them to replace unauthorized workers.

"I think that's the strategy overall: Deport the undocumented and replace them with H-2A low-wage workers," Costa said.

Unlike most other work visa categories, those for farm workers have no annual limits. Usage has grown about 10-fold over the past 20 years, with a record 315,000 such visas issued in fiscal year 2024, the most recent data.

In a legal notice before the new rules took effect, officials described the changes as eliminating a "number of unnecessary, burdensome, and costly requirements on employers." The United Farm Workers and other farm labor advocates have sued the administration to block the wage changes, arguing reductions for foreign workers will also drive down salaries for domestic workers.

To take part in the program, employers need to show that hiring foreigners won't "adversely affect" U.S. workers. They aren't allowed to charge recruitment fees. Workers are reimbursed for meals daily, as well as the cost of travel from their home country and their return home. Contracts vary, but typically H-2A workers come for six to nine months, and many return year after year.

Mexico accounted for about 286,000 H-2A visa holders in fiscal year 2024, according to the most recent data published by the U.S. State Department. South African farm workers represented the second-largest group, with about 14,700 temporary workers. There were also 18 Canadians.

Though the wage reductions will vary by state – the rules factor in cost of living and employers still have to meet local minimum wage rules – workers across the country will see cuts. In Georgia, for example, the lowest paid could see a cut of $5.56 an hour to $10.77. In California, the lowest rate will drop by about $3, to roughly $16 an hour.

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REPORT

Michigan flood, tornado damage in bid for aid, state police urge

By CAROL THOMPSON
The Detroit News (TNS)

DETROIT — People who own property damaged by the "historic" flooding and tornado activity in Michigan last week should report damage to the state, officials from the Michigan State Police Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division said.

Damage reports will help Gov. Gretchen Whitmer seek federal disaster funding, said Capt. Kevin Sweeney, deputy state director of Emergency Management and commander of MSP Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division.

"We strongly encourage everyone to report your damage and include photos," Sweeney said in a press release. "The information you provide directly supports response efforts and helps build a better picture of the extent of damages that will be used to determine if federal help is available."

The MSP created an online self-reporting tool to collect damage reports, photos and contact information.

The survey asks about the types of property damaged, how property is used, insurance coverage, the extent of damage and more. People can upload photos along with their damage reports. They also can say whether they need additional help.

MSP will share the reports with local emergency managers.

Rain and snowmelt caused river levels to rise rapidly and flood communities throughout the state, and nine tornadoes touched down, Sweeney said.

List of Michigan counties in a state of emergency

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer placed nearly half of Michigan – 40 of the state's 83 counties – under a state of emergency because of the damage. The first was April 10 in Cheboygan County, since the Cheboygan River was rising and threatening to overtop the Cheboygan Lock and Dam Complex. That emergency declaration remains in effect.

Whitmer activated the State Emergency Operations Center on April 14. The next day, she issued state of emergency declarations in 32 more counties: Alcona, Allegan, Alpena, Antrim, Arenac, Barry, Benzie, Charlevoix, Clare, Crawford, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Gratiot, Iosco, Kalkaska, Lake, Leelanau, Manistee, Menominee, Missaukee, Montcalm, Montmorency, Newaygo, Oceana, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Osceola, Presque Isle, Roscommon, Saginaw, Shiawassee and Wexford.

On April 18, she issued emergency declarations in Eaton, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Mecosta and Muskegon counties, as well as the cities of Ann Arbor and Kalamazoo.

On April 20, she issued emergency declarations in Iron and Marquette counties.

How Michigan can get federal disaster aid

Local, state and tribal governments can seek federal disaster help when they are not able to fully respond to residents' needs after a disaster like tornadoes or flooding, according to Michigan State Police.

Governors can request federal help for emergencies or disasters. If the president grants the request, the Federal Emergency Management Agency coordinates a response. FEMA determines what help is available based on needs identified in damage assessments.

FEMA disaster help can include aid given to individuals, aid given to public entities to repair or replace damaged facilities, or for hazard mitigation assistance to help reduce future losses to private and public property.

Flooded homes can be seen along Crist Isle Drive, on Michigan's Black Lake on Thursday. David Guralnick / The Detroit News / TNS

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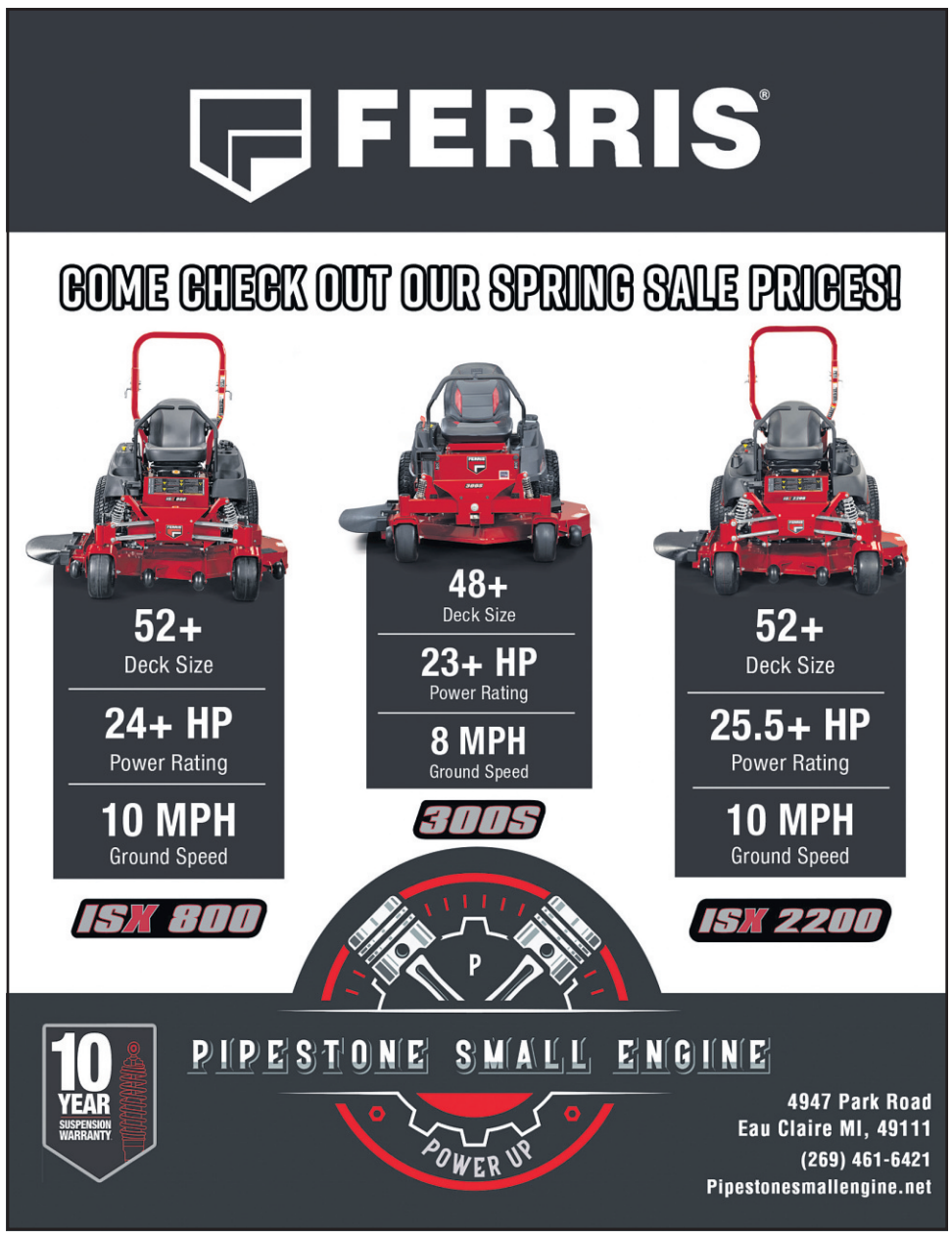

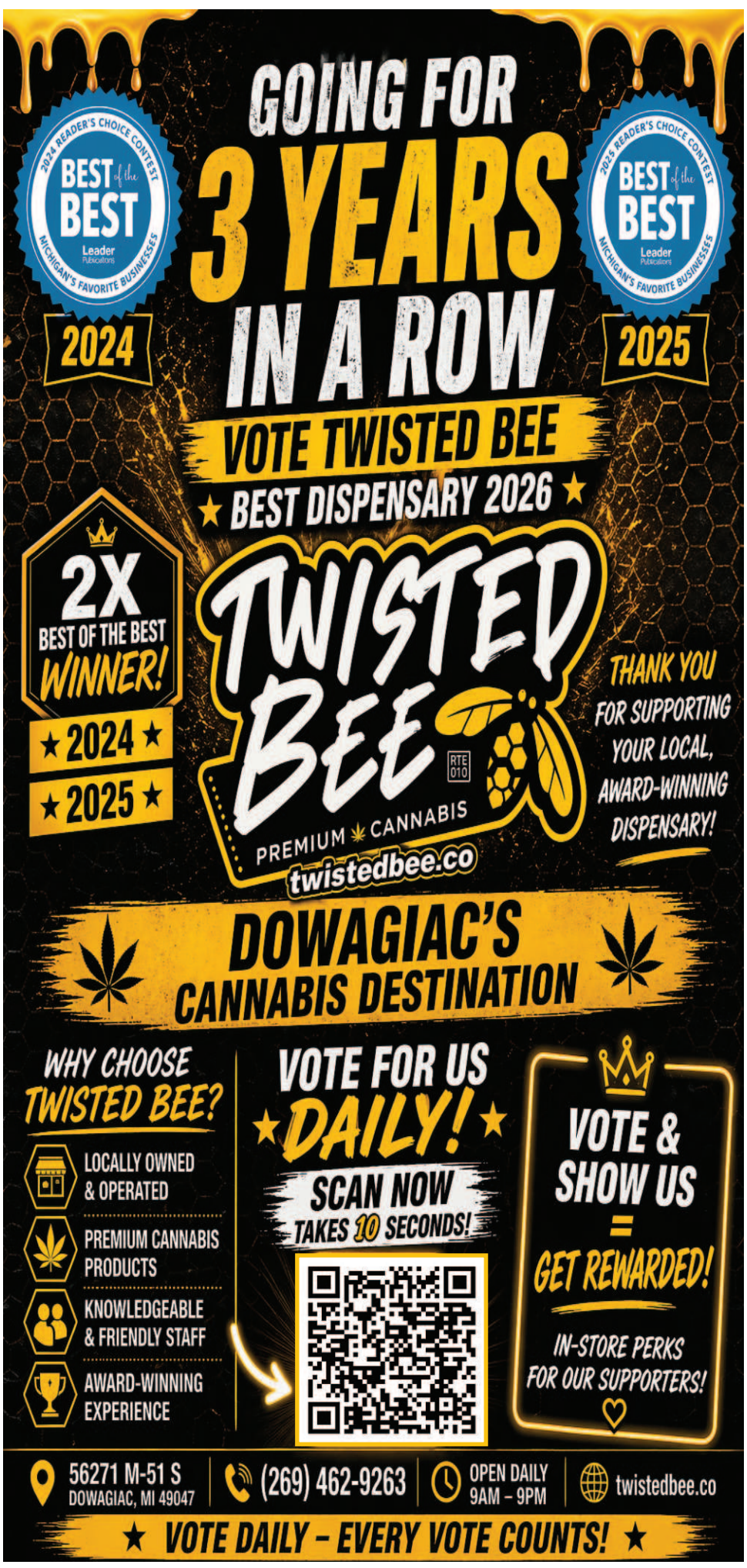

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Sports

McDonald surpasses 100-goal milestone
Page B3

Got results?
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Cardinals select Notre Dame's Love with No. 3 pick in draft

By DAVID BRANDT
Associated Press

TEMPE, Ariz. — The Arizona Cardinals bucked recent draft wisdom when they selected Notre Dame's Jeremiyah Love with the No. 3 overall pick in the NFL draft on Thursday night, making him the highest selected running back since Saquon Barkley went No. 2 in 2018.

Love said he wasn't surprised at all – particularly after a talk with Cardinals general manager Monti Ossenfort last week that made him feel like the desert was a real possibility.

"I'm not going to get into the specifics of it, but we had a great conversation," Love said. "I love him. He loves me. And we're going to make this relationship work."

The Cardinals and first-year coach Mike LaFleur picked up arguably the best offensive playmaker on the board when they selected the Fighting Irish star. The 6-foot, 212-pound unanimous All-America selection ran for 1,372 yards and 18 touchdowns in his final college season while also catching three TDs.

"I've said this about running backs – they come in all shapes and sizes," LaFleur said. "What's unique about him in my opinion, is that in all three phases, run game, pass game and protection ... he doesn't have a weakness."

The 20-year-old followed that electric junior year with a standout performance at the combine, running a 4.36 in the 40-yard dash. Now he joins a short list of running backs selected in the top 10 over the past decade that includes Barkley, Leonard Fournette, Bijan Robinson and Ashton Jeanty.

See **LOVE**, page B2

Gene J. Puskar / AP

Notre Dame running back Jeremiyah Love, right, poses with NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell after being chosen by the Arizona Cardinals with the third overall pick during the first round of the NFL draft on Thursday in Pittsburgh.

Ben Sanders / HP Staff

The Brandywine baseball team celebrates coach David Sidenbender's 500th career win on Wednesday.

Brandywine's Sidenbender gets 500th career win on the diamond

Coach hits milestone in DH sweep of Dowagiac

By BEN SANDERS
Paxton Media Group

NILES — David Sidenbender's 500th win as Brandywine baseball coach wasn't one of most impressive victories in his tenure, but it did illustrate some of the lessons he's tried to instill in his players over the years.

Brandywine swept Dowagiac 11-1 and 5-4 on Wednesday in a Lakeland Conference doubleheader, rallying to win the second game in the bottom of the seventh.

"These kids showed a lot of guts today," Sidenbender said. "We didn't play well the second game. We didn't throw strikes, we didn't make plays, but they found a way to gut it out. This is Bobcat baseball, how we've done it, just never give up. Tip my hat to Dowagiac, they played well the second game and we were able to overcome it."

Sidenbender is in his 25th year as the varsity baseball coach at Brandywine. He joins former softball coach Jim Myers and current girls basketball coach Josh Hood among 500-game winners at the school.

"To me, that's lofty company," Sidenbender said. "I don't even put myself in their echelon. I just love baseball and coaching it, and I'm just happy about the kids we have.

"I just feel blessed for being here, having guys that come and work hard and families who make baseball important. I'm just real happy with all the players and coaches that have helped me along the way. I just wanted to coach baseball. I loved baseball my whole life, I played baseball my whole life. This has been a great place for me."

Sidenbender had to wait a day for the milestone win. The doubleheader began Tuesday, but was postponed in the third inning with Brandywine (2-0 Lakeland, 9-0-1) up 5-0. The Bobcats quickly finished off a five-inning mercy rule victory when play resumed Wednesday, and carried that momentum into the second game. An RBI double by Ryder Richard and an RBI single by Brady Bosch put Brandywine up 2-0 in the bottom of the first.

See **SIDENDENDER**, page B2

Buchanan's Carlson gets 400th career softball win

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

BUCHANAN — Buchanan Softball Coach Rachel Carlson joined an exclusive club Wednesday night. The Bucks defeated Berrien Springs 10-1 to give Carlson her 400th career victory.

After the Shamrocks took an early 1-0 lead in the first inning, the Bucks responded with two runs in the second and broke the game open with a five-run fifth inning and a three-run seventh to seal the win. Haylee Legault struck out three batters to earn the win on the mound while Mailee Ely and Terynn Heller each tallied home runs.

Carlson, who reached the milestone in her eighth season as head coach, does not like talking about herself or the countless accolades she has piled up over the years, instead opting to praise her players and coaching staff for the results on the diamond.

"When recognition comes my way, my thoughts immediately turn to the remarkable young women I've had the privilege of coaching through the years – their hard work, resilience, and growth are the true reasons for any success I've been part of," she said. "I also think gratefully of my longtime assistant coach, John O'Bryant, whose steady support, strategic insight, and commitment have been central to our program. Any honors I receive are really shared with those players and with Coach O, whose contributions behind the scenes have made those moments possible."

Dowagiac boys, Brandywine girls win Lakeland dual meet

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

DOWAGIAC — Dowagiac track and field hosted Branndywine Wednesday in Lakeland Conference play. The Chieftain boys defeated the Bobcats 75-25 while the Brandywine girls bested Dowagiac 62-42.

Dowagiac took first place in the 400-meter run (Devin Rock, 53.52), 1600-meter run (Angel Brito, 5:36), 110-meter hurdles (Zach Zietlow, 20.66) 300-meter hurdles (Zietlow, 38.99), 400-meter relay (Jaylin Medrano; Quentin Hill; Marcus Wares; Aaron Gordon; 46.19), 800-meter relay (Medrano; Aaron Morgan; Devin Maddron; Zietlow, 1:35.16), 1600-meter relay (Maddron; Rock; Darryl Shivers; Isaiah Weatherspoon, 3:43.77) and 3200-meter relay (Brito; Axel Santiago; Jeremiah Heargraves; Balois Franco, 10:10.48).

See **MEET**, page B2

Tanya Hagen / For Leader Publications

Brandywine's Elihja Burt had a personal-best leap of 6-2 during Wednesday's dual meet against Dowagiac.

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MEET

From page B1

For Brandywine, Kaden Santana took first in the 100-meter dash (11.47), 200-meter dash (22.35) and long jump (20-1) and Elijha Burt in the high jump (6-2).

On the girls' side, Brandywine's Mackenna Price placed first in the 100-meter dash (13.57), 200-meter dash (27.8) and long jump (16-9.75). Allison Kline (2:49.95) and Emily Kline (13:15) took first place in the 800 and 3200-meter runs while Lily Gill placed first in the 100-meter hurdles (16.36) and 300-meter hurdles (47.98).

The 1600-meter relay (Aubrey Burt, Allison Kline, Laila Wogatzke, Isabella Padron) and 3200-meter relay (Allison Kline, Emily Kline, Wogatzke, Padron) earned first place finishes and Zaya Price took first in high jump with a 5-1 leap.

For Dowagiac, Skylie Johnson placed first in the 400-meter run (1:07.09) and the 400-meter relay (Shamyra Clark; Khamari Mack; Nadia Poorman; Ella Richter, 53.86) and 800-meter relay (Clark; Mack; Poorman; Richter, 2:12.42). Sophomore Kamyra Barhams took first place in the discus with a throw of 56-9.

Photos by Tanya Hagen / . For Leader Publications

LOVE

From page B1

"It is my job and it is my duty to make sure that when I step foot in Arizona that I do what I got to do to represent the running backs and represent Arizona in the right way," Love said.

Arizona finished with a 4-13 record last season, but now has an intriguing group of young skill position players that includes Love, All-Pro tight end Trey McBride and receivers Marvin Harrison Jr. and Michael Wilson.

There's little doubt about Love's talent, but there's also a question if he's the best fit for the Cardinals, who already have a crowded running back room with James Conner, Tyler Allgeier and Trey Benson.

"It's a good room, there's no question," Ossenfort said. "As with anything else, the competition will take care of itself. That'll be for Mike and his staff to sort out. But it's a good problem to have."

The Cardinals had been connected to Love in recent days, but many pundits thought they would be better served finding an edge rusher to pair with veteran Josh Sweat. Ohio State edge Arvell Reese was still on the board when the Cardinals picked, but the franchise elected to go with a running back that some have compared to three-time All-Pro Christian McCaffrey or Robinson.

Reese ended up going to the New York Giants at No. 5.

It's a big moment for LaFleur, who was hired to replace Jonathan Gannon after three years as the offensive coordinator for the Los Angeles Rams. Arizona hasn't made the playoffs since 2021 and has lost at least 13 games in three of the past four seasons.

It's also an important selection for Ossenfort, the fourth-year GM who has a mixed track record on first-round selections over three seasons. He took left tackle Paris Johnson Jr. with the No. 6 pick in 2023, and the Ohio State star has developed into a franchise cornerstone.

Ossenfort took another Ohio State product in Harrison with the No. 4 pick in 2024 and the receiver has been good, but not great, during his time with the Cardinals. His No. 27 pick in the same draft – Missouri defensive lineman Darius Robinson – has had two injury-filled, disappointing seasons.

Last year, the Cardinals took Mississippi defensive lineman Walter Nolen III at No. 16. He showed promise in limited playing time, but missed most of his rookie year with injuries.

Sue Ogrocki / AP

Notre Dame running back Jeremiyah Love meets with fans after being chosen by the Arizona Cardinals with the third overall pick during the first round of the NFL draft on Thursday in Pittsburgh.

SIDENDENDER

From page B1

Dowagiac (0-2, 1-9) didn't go away easily. An RBI single by Jamere Bacon in the third cut the deficit to 2-1. The Chieftains then scored three in the top of the fifth to take the lead, taking advantage of a walk, a hit batter, and an error. Caiden Freeman's sacrifice fly gave Dowagiac its first lead, and Riley McCaffery extended the margin with an RBI single.

Brandywine answered with two runs in the bottom of the fifth. Dowagiac got out of the inning in an unusual way, throwing out two runners at home plate on the same play, but in between, a throwing error allowed Richard to come home with the tying run.

Richard's baserunning was the deciding factor in the bottom of the seventh. He led off the inning with a single and stole second. He had a good jump trying to steal third when Hudson Aalfs hit a grounder to short, and when the throw went to first base, he headed home and beat the throw for the winning run.

"You want to put pressure on the defense, and that's what I always try to do, stealing bases and moving guys around like that," Sidenbender said. "You put pressure on teams and good things happen."

Kyler Marshall started for Brandywine and threw five innings, striking out five. Emerson Gogley earned the win in relief with two scoreless innings.

Gogley also pitched the final two innings of the first game. Aalfs got the win, throwing three shutout innings on Tuesday with six strikeouts.

Cole Wimberley went the distance pitching for Dowagiac in the second game.

"Cole did a great job on the mound," Dowagiac coach Mark Nate said. "Just a couple young mistakes that you can't have.

"They're a good team though. Dave's done a great job over there. Five hundred wins is a lot, so that's awesome."

Nate could reach that milestone himself in a few years. He's in his first year coaching at Dowagiac, his alma mater, but won 436 games and two state championships during his 18-year tenure at Lakeshore.

"We're having fun," Nate said. "It's great being back out on the field. It's great being back home."

First game

BRANDYWINE 11, DOWAGIAC 1

Dowagiac	**000**	**01**	**—**	**1**	**2**	**3**
Brandywine	**044**	**21**	**—**	**11**	**12**	**0**

WP – Hudson Aalfs 6k. LP – Tyler Feirick.
Top hitters – Dowagiac: Aiden Voorhees 1b, RBI. Brandywine: Kaeden Warfield 2 1b, 2 RBI; Ryder Richard 2 1b; Brady Bosch 2 1b, RBI; Bryce Hood 2b, RBI; Emerson Gogley 2b, 2 RBI; Mason Michelin 3 1b, RBI.

Second game

BRANDYWINE 5, DOWAGIAC 4

Dowagiac	**001**	**030**	**0**	**—**	**4**	**4**	**3**
Brandywine	**200**	**020**	**1**	**—**	**5**	**7**	**2**

WP – Emerson Gogley 3k (in relief). LP – Cole Wimberley 3k.
Top hitters – Dowagiac: Jamere Bacon 2 1b, RBI; Riley McCaffery 1b, RBI. Brandywine: Ryder Richard 1b, 2b, RBI; Brady Bosch 1b, RBI.
Records – Dowagiac 0-2 Lakeland, 1-9; Brandywine 2-0, 9-0-1.

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Photo provided

Johannah McDonald scored her 100th career goal during Dowagiac's 8-0 win over Buchanan on Wednesday.

McDonald surpasses 100-goal milestone as Dowagiac Chieftain

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

DOWAGIAC — Johannah McDonald has reached yet another milestone in her storied time as a Chieftain.

The Dowagiac senior scored her 100th career goal in a 8-0 win over Buchanan on Wednesday. McDonald scored three goals on the day to earn a hat trick, the first of which breached the 100-goal barrier. Lucy Hughes tallied two goals while Riley O'Konski, Valentina Mireles and Jimena Sanchez-Ortega each scored one. Chloe Brewer had two assists and Jaeleah Schoff added one assist.

"The girls played a very good game today," said Dowagiac Coach Joe Pasternak. "They moved the ball as well as I've seen this year. From the beginning, we controlled the pace and were able to create a lot of opportunities with our swinging and good passes. We did all the right things offensively and defensively today to get a good win."

HIGH SCHOOL SCOREBOARD

PMG STAFF

SOFTBALL

April 18 results

BUCHANAN 8, BANGOR 0

Bangor	**000**	**000**	**—**	**0**	**3**	**2**
Buchanan	**224**	**00X**	**—**	**8**	**8**	**1**

WP – H. Legault. LP – I. Horvath.
Top hitters – Buchanan: C. Weinberg HR, 2B, 4 RBI; R. Berry 2 2B; M. Ely 2B; A. Berry 1B, 2 RBI. Bangor: E. Wisniewski 1B; T. Gardner 1B; C. Criffield 1B.

BUCHANAN 8, JIMTOWN 1

Jimtown	**100**	**000**	**0**	**—**	**1**	**3**	**0**
Buchanan	**026**	**000**	**X**	**—**	**8**	**13**	**1**

WP – A. Villaire. LP – C. Carlson.
Top hitters – Buchanan: C. Weinberg HR, 3 1B, RBI; A. Berry HR, 2 RBI; A. Villaire 3 1B, 3 RBI; K. Singleton 2B, 1B; M. Ely 2 1B, RBI. Jimtown: K. Williams 1B, RBI; L. Gaugler 1B; C. Carlson 1B.

Wednesday's results

BUCHANAN 10, BERRIEN SPRINGS 1

Buchanan	**020**	**050**	**3**	**—**	**10**	**13**	**1**
B. Springs	**100**	**000**	**0**	**—**	**1**	**5**	**2**

WP – H. Legault 3k. LP – O. Spenner 3k.
Top hitters – Buchanan: M. Ely 1b, HR, 3 RBI; R. Berry 2b; C. Weinberg 1b, 2b; K. Singleton 2 1b, 2 RBI; T. Heller 1b, HR, 2 RBI; T. Carlin 1b, HR, RBI.

TRACK & FIELD

April 17 results

ALLEGAN INVITATIONAL

Boys

Team scores – 1. Wayland Union 110 , 2. Paw Paw 94 , 3. Otsego 85 , 4. Whitehall 75.5 , 5. Plainwell 48 , 6. Schoolcraft 45 , 7. Richland Gull Lake 44.5 , 8. Red Arrow (River Valley-New Buffalo) 36 , 9. Buchanan 34 , 10. Saugatuck 28 , 11. Middleville Thornapple-Kellogg 20 , 12. Holland Black River 16 , 13. Parchment 15 , 14. (tie) Fennville 6, Allegan 6.

Top local finishers

100 – 6. Tate Figy (B) 11.57; 200 – 8. Figy (B) 24.16; 400 – 7. Jack Sherwood (B) 53.24a; 800 – 7. Liam McBeth (B) 2:05.49; 1600 – 16. John Keser (B) 4:58.62; 3200 – 16. Keser (B) 10:58.17; 110 hurdles – 11. Jordan Corbett (B) 18.70; 300 hurdles – 14. Jordan Corbett (B) 45.68; 400 relay – 6. Buchanan (Jontel Williams, Tate Figy, Brody Reed, Carson Deming) 45.64; 800 relay – 3. Buchanan (Tate Figy, Jontel Williams, Brody Reed, Carson Deming) 1:33.70; 1600 relay – 2. Buchanan (Liam McBeth, Preston Payne, Kavion Goss, Jack Sherwood) 3:35.41; 3200 relay – 4. Buchanan (Liam McBeth, Jacob Kuntz, John Keser, Jack Sherwood) 8:31.12; Shot put – 21. Myles Anoskey (B) 33-6; Discus – 14. Wyatt Riggs (B) 101-7; High jump – 13. Jaret Seddon (B) 5-8; Pole vault – 5. Matthew Finn (B) 11-6; Long jump – 13. Cooper Mabry (B) 17-7 SB.

Girls

Team scores – 1. Otsego 128 , 2. Middleville Thornapple-Kellogg 115 , 3. Wayland Union 75.5 , 4. Saugatuck 60 , 5. Plainwell 55 , 6. Paw Paw 44 , 7. Richland Gull Lake 41 , 8. Allegan 38 , 9. Red Arrow (River Valley-New Buffalo) 35 , 10. Whitehall 31.5 , 11. Schoolcraft 18 , 12. Buchanan 9 , 13. Fennville 6 , 14. Parchment 3 , 15. Holland Black River 2 , 16. West Michigan Homeschool 1.

Top local finishers

100 – 17. Lynneah Ackerman (B) 14.42; 400 – 5. Lira Myers (B) 1:04.67; 800 – 19. Adyson Baker (B) 6:32.71; 3200 – 16. Avery Mollberg (B) 15:36.05; 100 hurdles – 13. Kyra Kilonzo (B) 20.41; 300 hurdles – 16. Kyra Kilonzo (B) 59.63; 400 relay – 10. Buchanan (Quaniah Crum, Lynneah Ackerman, Justyce Cashier, Audree Hunt) 57.80; 800 relay – 5. Buchanan (Justyce Cashier, Estrella King, Alaina Nagel, Lira Myers) 1:57.19; 1600 relay – 8. Buchanan (Justyce Cashier, Lira Myers, Alaina Nagel, Katelyn Kern) 4:42.13; Shot put – 13. Ava Erity (B) 24-1; Discus – 11. Morgan Cornelius (B) 60-5; High jump – 14. Lira Myers (B) 4-6; Long jump – 18. Quaniah Crum (B) 12-5.5.

WATERVLIET RELAYS

Boys

Team scores – 1. Hopkins 80, 2. Constantine 55, 3. Dowagiac Union 50, 4. Hartford 48, 5. Eau Claire 34, 6. (tie) Kalamazoo Christian 28, Cassopolis Ross Beatty 28, 8. Watervliet 27, 9. Brandywine 18, 10. Bridgman 16, 11. Benton Harbor 8, 12. Marcellus 3, 13. Coloma 2, 14. Kalamazoo Homeschool Sports 1.

Top local finishers

400 relay – 2. Cassopolis (Nikolas Craig, Jaylen Pratt, Cameron Steward, Aarenn Buck-Hooper) 45.10; 5. Dowagiac (Quentin Hill, Aaron Morgan, Marcus Wares, Jaylin Medrano) 46.07; 8. Brandywine (Elijhia Burt, Jase Deming, Tyler Schoff, Kaden Santana) 48.04; 4x200 relay – 3. Dowagiac (JaMicheal Kirby, Quentin Hill, Devin Rock, Jaylin Medrano) 1:34.35; 9. Cassopolis (Logan Burns, Bryce Carter, Riley Jones, Trevon Peterson-Evans) 1:41.27; 1600 relay – 1. Dowagiac (Devin Maddron, Devin Rock, Isaiah Weatherspoon, Darryl Shivers) 3:39.63; 3200 relay – 3. Dowagiac (Devin Maddron, Angel Brito, Axel Santiago, Jeremiah Hargreaves) 9:56.98; 10. Brandywine (Landon McGinnis, Fernando Soto-Vilagrana, Jonatan Gonzalez-Torres, Agustin Gonzalez Torres) 11:27.62; 4800 relay – 7. Brandywine (Agustin Gonzalez Torres, Tyler Schoff, Francis Rivera, Fernando Soto-Vilagrana) 29:26.20; Swedish 100-200-300-400 relay – 3. Dowagiac (Jaylin Medrano, Aaron Morgan, Devin Rock, Isaiah Weatherspoon) 2:11.97; 10. Brandywine (Wyatt Pelc, Lion Heindel, Lucas Kanagawa, Agustin Gonzalez Torres) 2:34.73; MMR 2400m (800-400-400-800) – 10. Brandywine (Jonatan Gonzalez-Torres, Agustin Gonzalez Torres, Francis Rivera, Fernando Soto-Vilagrana) 7:49.87; 400 shuttle hurdles – 4. Brandywine (Elijhia Burt, Wyatt Pelc, Jase Deming, Kaden Santana) 57.78; Shot put – 6. Quentin Hill (D) 42-4; 7. Riley Jones (C) 41-5; 14. Jaxson Andrews (B) 34-01; Discus – 2. Quentin Hill (D) 127-01.5; 14. Austin Rial (D) 89-6; 23. Will Hubbard (B) 75-10; 24. Riley Jones (C) 66-3High jump – 1. Jaylen Pratt (C) 6-04; 2. Jamiere Pratt (C) 6-02; 3. Elijhia Burt (B) 6-0; 4. Kaden Santana (B) 5-10; 10. Devin Rock (D) 5-0; Pole vault – 7. Jeremiah Hargreaves (D) 8-06; 8. Landon Severance (D) 8-06; Long jump – 4. Kaden Santana (B) 20-08.5; 10. Aaron Morgan (D) 18-08.75; 13. Marcus Wares (D) 17-10.00; 15. Elijhia Burt (B) 17-08.

Girls

Team scores – 1. Constantine 80, 2. Brandywine 63, 3. Hopkins 58, 4. Watervliet 52, 5. Bridgman 34, 6. (tie) Kalamazoo Christian 28, Benton Harbor 28, 8. (tie) Hartford 14, Dowagiac Union 14, 10. (tie) St Joseph Michigan Lutheran 6, Berrien County Youth Track 6, 12. Marcellus 5, 13. Cassopolis Ross Beatty 4, 14. (tie) Coloma 2, Kalamazoo Homeschool Sports 2.

Top local finishers

400 relay – 2. Brandywine (Mackenna Price, Karleigh Byrd, Zaya Price, Grace Colbert-Lorenz) 54.06; 4. Cassopolis (Maya Walker, Madison Nelson, Ava Christopher, Brooklyn Carter) 56.05; 800 relay – 1. Brandywine (Mackenna Price, Karleigh Byrd, Zaya Price, Lily Gill) 1:50.20a; 7. Dowagiac (Shamyra Clark, Khamari Mack, Ella Richter, Nadia Poorman) 1:57.61; 9. Cassopolis (Alayjah Beck, Ava Christopher, Brooklyn Carter, Akoyi Goodlow) 1:58.75; 4x400 relay – 6. Brandywine (Allison Murray, Grace Colbert-Lorenz, Emily Kline, Alison Murray) 4:59.26; 3200 relay – 4. Brandywine (Allison Kline, Emily Kline, Alison Murray, Isabella Padron) 12:03.29; Swedish 100-200-300-400 relay – 1. Brandywine (Lily Gill, Karleigh Byrd, Zaya Price, Mackenna Price) 2:32.37; 7. Dowagiac (Shamyra Clark, Khamari Mack, Nadia Poorman, Skylie Johnson) 2:44.54; MMR 2400m (800-400-400-800) – 2. Dowagiac (Sadie Bonczynski, Skylie Johnson, Jocelyn Kiner, Vianet Hernandez) 7:51.64; 7. Brandywine (Emily Kline, Allison Kline, Laila Wogatzke, Aubrey Burt) 8:54.91; 400 shuttle hurdles – 2. Brandywine (Grace Colbert-Lorenz, Alison Murray, Isabella Padron, Lily Gill) 1:04.77; 3. Dowagiac (Jaleah Henderson, Skylie Johnson, Ella Richter, Nadia Poorman) 1:05.38; Shot put – 14. Hailey Smith (B) 22-05.00; 19. Laila Wogatzke (B) 15-08; Discus – 16. Hailey Smith (B) 53-04.5; 21. Aubrey Burt (B) 27-06.5; High jump – 2. Zaya Price (B) 4-10.00; 4. Karleigh Byrd (B) 4-06; Long jump – 1. Mackenna Price (B) 16-06; 2. Lily Gill (B) 15-11; 17. Mikayla Myrthil (Cass) 13-03.5.

Mixed

400 relay – 9. Brandywine (Relay Team) 4:33.06.

PORTAGE NORTHERN HUSKIES INVITE

Boys

Team scores – 1. Jenison 148, 2. BC Lakeview 114, 3. Portage Northern 88.5, 4. St. Joseph 78, 5. Edwardsburg 72.5, 6. Kalamazoo Hackett 67, 7. Kalamazoo Loy Norrix 66.5, 8. Stevensville Lakeshore 55, 9. South Haven 28.5.

Top local finishers

100 – 3. Gio Orue (E) 11.93; 200 – 4. Gio Orue (E) 23.71; 400 – 5. Mobius Stubblefield (E) 50.99; 800 – 5. George Scupham (E) 2:01.82; 1600 – 2. Ethan Ferguson (E) 4:35.51; 3200 – 4. Ethan Ferguson (E) 9:59.76; 110 hurdles – 4. Lyle Schaible (E) 17.90; 300 hurdles – 8. Lyle Schaible (E) 45.34; 400 relay – 5. Edwardsburg (Fredrik Sante, Chase Karkiewicz, Mobius Stubblefield, Gio Orue) 46.11; 1600 relay – 2. Edwardsburg (Lyle Schaible, Mobius Stubblefield, George Scupham, Jack Bell) 3:28.69; Shot put – 10. Frank Morris (E) 38-9.25; Discus – 16. Dominic Axline (E) 91-2.5; High jump – 3. Zachary Overmyer (E) 6-4; Pole vault – 3. Lucas Frentz (E) 12-6; Long jump – 16. Peter Szlanfucht (E) 18-3.5.

Girls

Team scores – 1. Stevensville Lakeshore 115.5, 2. BC Lakeview 110 , 3. St. Joseph 102, 4. Portage Northern 94, 5. Jenison 91, 6. Kalamazoo Hackett 78, 7. Edwardsburg 67, 8. Kalamazoo Loy Norrix 48, 9. South Haven 2.5.

Top local finishers

100 – 9. Caliana Manfred (E) 13.86; 200 – 6. Kennedy Goorhouse (E) 27.8; 400 – 12. Piper Bryant (E) 1:09.54; 800 – 11. Jade Leith (E) 2:42.45; 1600 – 4. Grace Leman (E) 5:34.93; 3200 – 2. Grace Leman (E) 12:11.25; 100 hurdles – 4. Sarina Mora (E) 17.20; 300 hurdles – 7. Sienna Kaylor (E) 53.56; 400 relay – 7. Edwardsburg (Riley Petruska, Kennedy Goorhouse, Cassidy Frentz, Caliana Manfred) 52.94; 800 relay – 3. Edwardsburg (Riley Petruska, Caliana Manfred, Georgia Babcock, Kennedy Goorhouse) 1:53.07; 1600 relay – 4. Edwardsburg (Riley Petruska, Caliana Manfred, Cassidy Frentz, Kennedy Goorhouse) 4:22.47; 3200 relay – 5. Edwardsburg (Brynlee Landis, Jade Leith, Giselle Babcock, Layla Gableman) 11:04.81; Discus – 6. Sarah Pippin (E) 96-7; High jump – 1. Sarah Pippin (E) 5-2; Pole vault – 8. Abbigail Peat (E) 8-0; Long jump – 2. Sarina Mora (E) 16-6.

Wednesday's results

LAKELAND DUAL

Boys

Team scores – Berrien Springs 81.5, Buchanan 41.5
100 – 5. Brody Reed (B) 11.82a; 200 – 3. Tate Figy (B) 23.81a; 400 – 3. Kavion Goss (B) 53.14a; 800 – 2. John Keser (B) 2:13.37a; 1600 – 2. Liam McBeth (B) 4:50.26a; 110 hurdles – 2. Jordan Corbett (B) 18.84a; 300 hurdles – 1. Jordan Corbett (B) 46.12a; 400 relay – 1. Buchanan (Isaiah Birdyshaw Robinson, Matthew Stines-Vancourt, Kyler Daniel, Aiden Toll) 48.69a; 800 relay – 2. Buchanan (Devon Simpson, Jameson Pleasant, Jaret Seddon, Ben Bosse) 1:46.53a; 1600 relay – 3. Buchanan (Luis Novis, Niklas Morgenroth, Silas Schlutt, Gellert Boros) 4:30.29a ; shot put – 4. Elijah Camille-McLeod (B) 35-5.5 ; discus – 2. Myles Anoskey (B) 103-9 ; high jump – 2. Ben Bosse (B) 5-6 ; pole vault – 1. Matthew Finn (B) 12-6 ; long jump – 2. Preston Payne (B) 18-8.

Girls

Team scores – Berrien Springs 93, Buchanan 29
100 – 5. Quaniah Crum (B) 14.12a; 200 – 3. Quaniah Crum (B) 29.91a; 400 – 1. Lira Myers (B) 1:06.19a; 800 – 2. Adyson Baker (B) 3:01.58a; 1600 – 2. Adyson Baker (B) 6:47.05; 400 relay – 1. Buchanan (Kyra Kilonzo, Maleigha McKinney, Quaniah Crum, Lynneah Ackerman) 57.28a ; shot put – 6. Ava Erity (B) 22-8.75 ; discus – 6. Morgan Cornelius (B) 65-2 ; high jump – 2. Lira Myers (B) 4-6 ; pole vault – 2. Maleigha McKinney (B) 7-6 ; long jump – 5. Quaniah Crum (B) 12-1.

BOYS GOLF

Thursday's results

LAKELAND/BCS JAMBOREE

at Lake Michigan Hills

Team scores – 1. Berrien Springs 181, 2. Brandywine 202, 3. Buchanan 207, 4. Our Lady of the Lake 217, 5. Dowagiac 225, 6. Howardsville 234, 7. Red Arrow 235.
Medalist – Carson Tripp (BS) 42.
Brandywine – Blake Magyar 49, Jayden Thomas 49, Davis Lotsbaich 49, Nolan Shaffer 55.
Buchanan – Max Cornelius 45, Caden McMahon 49, Jackson Poehner 54, Easton Maay 59.
Dowagiac – Jeremiah Bond 43, James Greene 58, Kyler True 60, Emmett Roach 64.

GIRLS TENNIS

Thursday's results

NILES 6, THREE RIVERS 2

Singles — 1. Cheyenne Small (N) d. Jayna Larson 6-2, 6-1; 2. Donna Babler (N) d. Natalie Moore 6-7 (4), ret.; 3. Mia Abarca (N) d. Soreeya Hoeung 6-1, 6-4; 4. Bella Castillo (N) d. Angeleena Ham 6-2, 6-4.
Doubles – 1. Hailee Mitchell-Addison Vandalsen (N) d. Lexie Page-Alyssa Jimenez 6-2, 6-1; 2. Brooklyn Hemminger-Scarlet Thalman (N) d. Camryn Johansen-Aubrey Hearld 6-4, 6-3; 3. Lilah Zabonick-Peyton Bingaman (TR) d. Azlynne Ingle-Norah Rogers 6-4, 7-5; 4. Ariana Gonzalez-Kenzie Rennie (TR) d. Kennedy Holloway-Bella Ladesma 2-6, 6-2, 6-1.

BUCHANAN 8, DOWAGIAC 0

Singles — 1. Rebeca Ballesteros-Borrego (B) d. Hailey Spivey 6-0, 6-0; 2. Finley Kehoe (B) d. Kylie Lynch 6-0, 6-1; 3. Madeline Tibbles (B) d. Makyah West 7-5, 6-4; 4. Ava Brown (B) d. Kai Kruger 6-3, 1-6, 10-7.
Doubles – 1. Morgan Weldy-Lillian Wegener (B) d. Rylan Miller-Riley Huff 6-2, 6-0; 2. Isabella Gedert-Taylor Sweeney (B) d. Lily Lebeda-Chloe Samuel 6-2, 6-0; 3. Addison Brown-Ava Brown (B) d. Olivia Stockwell-Kendall Kroepel 6-3, 6-1; 4. Sophia Rowland-Brynn Mabry (B) d. Elizabeth Kelly-Belinda Pavia-Morales 6-2, 4-6, 10-5.

GIRLS SOCCER

Monday's scores

EDWARDSBURG 4, PAW PAW 0

Goals — Kennedy Goorhouse, Marissa Heiser, Shaylin Tinkham, Amelia Wilt.
Assists – Morgan Huff, Tinkham.
Records – Edwardsburg 3-2, 2-0

Wednesday's scores

DOWAGIAC 8, BUCHANAN 0

Goals — Johannah McDonald 3, Lucy Hughes 2, Riley O'Konski, Valentina Mireles, Jimena Sanchez-Ortega, Chloe Brewer
Assists – Brewer 2, Laeleah Schoff
Records – Dowagiac 7-1-1

Thursday's scores

DOWAGIAC 2, SOUTH HAVEN 2

Goals — Johannah McDonald, Lucy Hughes
Records – Dowagiac 7-1-2

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0900 LEGALS

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
CASS COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
2025-322-DE
Carol M. Bealor

Court address Court telephone no.
60296 M-62,
Cassopolis, MI 49031
(269) 445-4475

Estate of:
Sharon L. Boyne
Date of Birth: * January 1, 1937

TO ALL CREDITORS: **

NOTICE TO CREDITORS:
The decedent, Sharon L. Boyne, died 02/06/2023. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Guardianship & Alternative, Inc., personal representative, or to both the probate court at 60296 M-62, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date: 04/20/2026

Butzel Long
Mowitt S. Drew III P60525
Attorney name Bar no.
811 Ship St Ste 301
Address
St Joseph, MI 49085
City, state, zip
(269)287-2000
Telephone no.

Guardianship & Alternative, Inc
Personal representative
P.O. Box 240
Address
Dowagiac, MI 49047
City, state, zip
(269)782-2953
Telephone no.

0900 LEGALS

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
COUNTY OF Cass

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
2026-061-DE

Estate of: Darryl D. Reynolds
Date of birth: 03/02/1957

TO ALL CREDITORS: *

NOTICE TO CREDITORS:
The decedent, Darryl D. Reynolds died 11/30/2025. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Troy Reynolds, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 68518 Garver Lake Road, Edwardsburg, MI 49112 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date 04/17/2026

Nicholas Raymond Hogue
P81291
Attorney name Bar no.
107 Pennsylvania Ave
Address
Dowagiac, MI 49047
City, State, Zip
269-782-9895
Telephone no.

Troy Reynolds
Personal representative
68518 Garver Lake Road
Address
Edwardsburg, MI 49112
City, state, zip
269-259-5665
Telephone no.

Howard Township
Cass County, Michigan
Board of Trustees
April 21, 2026
The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm at the Township Hall.
Board Action
Approved Meeting Agenda.
Approved the minutes of the 3/17/26 Board Meeting
Approved the financial report with an ending balance of 2,285,530.39 including a CD
Approved the payment of bills through April 21, 2026
Approved the departmental reports
Public Comment Occurred
Approved Resolution 2026-08 Sewer Rate Increase
Public Comment Occurred
Adjourn the meeting at 7:45p.m.

"Auctioning off a few abandoned cars on Thursday, April 30th, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. at RB Towing 68686 M 62, Edwardsburg, MI 49112."

Spring and Summer Rummage and Bake Sale

Homemade goods and candy. Gluten-free options available. New and gently used clothing, shoes, kitchenware, and more! May 1 9am-4pm, May 2 9am-3pm. Saturday Bag Sale $4/bag, buy 2 get one free.

First United Methodist Church Dowagiac, 326 N. Lowe St., Dowagiac, MI 49047. For questions, call Darlene at 269-782-8551

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE THIS FIRM IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION WE OBTAIN WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT THE NUMBER BELOW IF YOU ARE IN ACTIVE DUTY. ATTN PURCHASERS: This sale may be rescinded by the foreclosing mortgagee. In that event, your damages, if any, shall be limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Under the power of sale contained herein in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or a cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in CASS County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM, on May 20, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE SALE – Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by David Wyatt, an unmarried man, original mortgagor, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems as Nominee for Milend, Inc, dated March 8, 2024, and recorded in Liber 1243 Page 481 in CASS County records, Michigan, and assigned to Planet Home Lending, LLC by an Assignment of Mortgage recorded on July 22, 2025 in Liber 1263, Page 91, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of One Hundred Ninety-Four Thousand Six-Hundred Fifty-One and 63/100 dollars ($194,651.63). Said premises are situated in the Township of Jefferson, County of Cass, State of Michigan to wit: Part of the North half of the Northeast quarter of Section 31, Township 7 South, Range 15 West, Jefferson Township, Cass County, Michigan, described as: From the North quarter corner of said Section 31, measure South 89 degrees 47 minutes 45 seconds East, along the North line of said Section 1326.00 feet to the point of beginning of the land herein described; thence South 89 degrees 47 minutes 45 seconds East, along said North line, 156.50 feet; thence South 0 degrees 22 minutes 35 seconds East, 454.77 feet; thence North 89 degrees 55 minutes 15 seconds West, 156.50 feet; thence North 0 degrees 22 minutes 35 seconds West, 455.11 feet to the point of beginning. Commonly known as: 27134 Deerfield Lane, Edwardsburg, Michigan 49112 Parcel No.: 14-030-031-409-95 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Dated: April 4, 2026 For more information, please call: (513) 444-4100 Sottile and Barile PLLC Attorneys for Plaintiff 394 Wards Corner Boulevard, Suite 180 Loveland, OH 45140 File MF2510005 - Wyatt, David (FHA) - DA (04-04)(04-25)

0900 LEGALS

STATE OF MICHIGAN
CASS COUNTY
PROBATE COURT

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO.
2026-074-DE
Hon. Carol M. Bealor

Estate of: Donna Jean Robinson
Date of Birth: 11/11/1938

TO ALL CREDITORS:

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Donna Jean Robinson, died 03/15/2010. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Samantha Thalman, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 60296 M-62, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date: 04/20/2026

Attorney Name:
Shawn P. Ryan, P47249
220 W. Colfax Ave., Suite 100
South Bend, IN 46601
574-289-0909

Personal Representative:
Samantha Thalman
1610 Howard St.
Niles, MI 49120
269-240-7107

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
The Niles Housing Commission has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the waste removal services in the operation of its public housing authority facilities located in the City of Niles, Michigan. All proposals in response to the RFP must be submitted in the format specified in the RFP, which can be downloaded from the City of Niles website at www.nilesmi.org under the "Frequently Requested" tab. Proposals must be submitted on or before May 9, 2026 in accordance with the RFP instructions.

SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - CASS COUNTY Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM, on May 27, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Steven W. Robinson, unmarried Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), as mortgagee, for lender and lender`s successors and assigns Date of mortgage: February 28, 2012 Recorded on March 1, 2012, Liber 1037, on Page 2589, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): The Huntington National Bank Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: Forty-Five Thousand Eight Hundred Forty-Five and 88/100 Dollars ($45,845.88) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Cass County, and described as: Lot Numbered One Hundred Twenty-seven (127), Andrew Lester`s Addition to the City of Dowagiac, according to the plat thereof, as recorded in Liber 1 of Plats, page 53, Cass County Records. Commonly known as 113 Bishop St, Dowagiac, MI 49047 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. The Huntington National Bank Mortgagee/Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400 1590682 (04-18)(05-09)

Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM on MAY 20, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Joseph R. Reaves and Tara R. Reaves, to Fifth Third Bank, Mortgagee, dated October 24, 2019 and recorded October 29, 2019 in Liber 1162, Page 2318 Cass County Records, Michigan. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Ninety-Four Thousand One Hundred Forty-One and 42/100 Dollars ($94,141.42).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Cass County, Michigan at 10:00 AM on MAY 20, 2026.
Said premises are located in the Township of Milton, Cass County Michigan, and are described as:
Lots Numbered 8 and 9 of DUNNING ACRES, according to the plat thereof recorded in Liber 1 of Plats, page(s) 333 of Cass County Records; EXCEPTING THEREFROM That part of said Lots 8 and 9 which lies Southeasterly of a line described as: Commencing at the East Quarter corner of Section 11, Town 8 South, Range 16 West, thence South 00 degrees 10 minutes 42 seconds East along the East line of said Section 11 a distance of 452.79 feet to the point of beginning, thence South 35 degrees 55 minutes 44 seconds West a distance of 242.37 feet to the survey line of Highway US-12 and point of ending.
69594 Anderson Rd, Niles, Michigan 49120
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period. FinCEN reporting will be required of all successful purchasers, absent a lawful exemption.
Dated: April 18, 2026
File No. 26-003083
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400 (04-18)(05-09)

0900 LEGALS

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
CASS COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
2026-079-DE
Carol M. Bealor

Court address Court telephone no.
60296 M-62,
Cassopolis, MI 49031
(269) 445-4475

Estate of:
Christopher Joseph Jankoviak
Date of Birth: * June 27, 1968

TO ALL CREDITORS: **

NOTICE TO CREDITORS:
The decedent, Christopher Joseph Jankoviak, died 12/06/2025. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Mandy Jankoviak, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 60296 M-62, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date: 04/14/2026

Butzel Long
Josephine M. Parrinello P86619
Attorney name Bar no.
201 W. Big Beaver, Ste 1200
Address
Troy, MI 48084
City, state, zip
(248)858-1427
Telephone no.

Mandy Jankoviak
Personal representative
875 Wadaduga Lane
Address
Niles, MI 49120
City, state, zip
(574)309-1677
Telephone no.

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Be proficient in understanding our budget, strategic planning, business practices, facility management and conduct our yearly staff performance evaluations.

Required and Desired Skills:
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Possess strong communication skills and develop strong community relationships.
Candidate must be proficient in use of Microsoft Office Suite software.
Must be able to organize and maintain records for the annual audit.
Background checks and drug testing required.
Must have valid drivers license
Deadline to apply is May 7, 2026

Applications are available at the Senior Center, or send resume to:
Email: personnel@centralcountyseniorcenter.org, or
Mail: Central County Senior Center
Attn: Board of Directors
4083 E. Shawnee Road
PO Box 252
Berrien Springs, MI 49103
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NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in CASS County, starting promptly at 10:00 am, on May 20, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE INFORMATION: Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by Brent W. Braaksma and Katie J. Braaksma, husband and wife, whose address is 66741 Conrad Road, Edwardsburg, Michigan 49112, as original Mortgagors, to Fifth Third Mortgage Company, being a mortgage dated October 9, 2013, and recorded on October 21, 2013 in Liber 1068 Page 286, Cass County Records, State of Michigan and then assigned to NewRez LLC, as assignee as documented by an assignment dated February 6, 2026 and recorded on February 6, 2026 in Liber 1271 Page 2509, Cass County Records, Michigan, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of TWO HUNDRED SIXTY-FOUR THOUSAND NINETY-EIGHT AND 68/100 DOLLARS ($264,098.68). Said premises are situated in the City of Edwardsburg, County of Cass, State of Michigan, and are described as: PARCEL I FROM THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SECTION 30, TOWN 7 SOUTH, RANGE 15 WEST, MEASURE EAST, ALONG THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID SECTION, 471.94 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE LAND HEREIN DESCRIBED, THENCE NORTH 18 DEGREES 49 MINUTES 31 SECONDS EAST 53.54 FEET, THENCE NORTH 05 DEGREES 00 MINUTES 28 SECONDS WEST 65.49 FEET; THENCE NORTH 23 DEGREES 17 MINUTES 16 SECONDS WEST 151.21 FEET, THENCE NORTH 07 DEGREES 15 MINUTES 05 SECONDS WEST 168.57 FEET, THENCE NORTH 25 DEGREES 51 MINUTES 53 SECONDS WEST 53.31 FEET; THENCE NORTH 13 DEGREES 54 MINUTES 10 SECONDS WEST 79.97 FEET; THENCE NORTH 14 DEGREES 07 MINUTES 11 SECONDS WEST 134.26 FEET, THENCE NORTH 07 DEGREES 08 MINUTES 19 SECONDS WEST 138.57 FEET, THENCE NORTH 28 DEGREES 17 MINUTES 56 SECONDS WEST 86.14 FEET, THENCE NORTH 46 DEGREES 04 MINUTES 52 SECONDS WEST 70.39 FEET, THENCE EAST 80.88 FEET, THENCE NORTH 00 DEGREES 02 MINUTES 25 SECONDS WEST 309.90 FEET TO AN INTERMEDIATE TRAVERSE LINE ALONG THE SOUTH SIDE OF PINE LAKE, THENCE SOUTH 53 DEGREES 52 MINUTES 43 SECONDS EAST ALONG SAID TRAVERSE LINE, 272.24 FEET TO THE EAST LINE OF THE WEST 15 ACRES OF THE WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST FRACTIONAL QUARTER OF SAID SECTION, THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 13 MINUTES 35 SECONDS EAST, ALONG SAID WEST LINE, 1089.43 FEET TO THE SOUTH LINE OF THE SAID SECTION, THENCE WEST, ALONG SAID SOUTH LINE, 51.40 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. INCLUDING ALL LAND BETWEEN THE EAST AND WEST LINES EXTENDED NORTHERLY TO THE WATER'S EDGE OF PINE LAKE. PARCEL II RIGHTS AND BENEFITS OF AN EASEMENT FOR INGRESS AND EGRESS OVER THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED REAL ESTATE. BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SECTION 30, TOWN 7 SOUTH, RANGE 15 WEST; THENCE NORTH 00 DEGREES 02 MINUTES 25 SECONDS WEST, ALONG THE WEST LINE OF SAID SECTION, 16.50 FEET, THENCE EAST, PARALLEL WITH THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID SECTION, 460.15 FEET, THENCE NORTH 18 DEGREES 49 MINUTES 31 SECONDS EAST 38.25 FEET, THENCE NORTH 05 DEGREES 00 MINUTES 28 SECONDS WEST 59.35 FEET; THENCE NORTH 23 DEGREES 17 MINUTES 16 SECONDS WEST 150.88 FEET, THENCE NORTH 07 DEGREES 15 MINUTES 05 SECONDS WEST 168.19 FEET; THENCE NORTH 25 DEGREES 51 MINUTES 53 SECONDS WEST 52.33 FEET; THENCE NORTH 13 DEGREES 54 MINUTES 10 SECONDS WEST 81.66 FEET, THENCE NORTH 14 DEGREES 07 MINUTES 11 SECONDS WEST 135.24 FEET; THENCE NORTH 07 DEGREES 08 MINUTES 19 SECONDS WEST 138.50 FEET, THENCE NORTH 28 DEGREES 17 MINUTES 55 WEST 80.47 FEET, THENCE NORTH 46 DEGREES 04 MINUTES 52 SECONDS WEST 84.95 FEET, THENCE EAST 47.58 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 46 DEGREES 04 MINUTES 52 SECONDS EAST 55.84 FEET, THENCE SOUTH 28 DEGREES 17 MINUTES 55 SECONDS EAST 81.80 FEET, THENCE SOUTH 07 DEGREES 08 MINUTES 19 SECONDS EAST 140.65 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 14 DEGREES 07 MINUTES 11 SECONDS EAST 133.29 FEET, THENCE SOUTH 13 DEGREES 54 MINUTES 10 SECONDS EAST 78.27 FEET, THENCE SOUTH 25 DEGREES 51 MINUTES 53 SECONDS EAST 54.28 FEET, THENCE SOUTH 07 DEGREES 15 MINUTES 05 SECONDS EAST 168.95 FEET, THENCE SOUTH 23 DEGREES 17 MINUTES 16 SECONDS EAST 151.54 FEET, THENCE SOUTH 05 DEGREES 00 MINUTES 28 SECONDS EAST 71.63 FEET, THENCE SOUTH 18 DEGREES 48 MINUTES 31 SECONDS WEST 51.40 FEET TO THE SAID SOUTH LINE, THENCE WEST 489.38 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING PARCEL III RIGHTS AND BENEFITS OF AN EASEMENT FOR INGRESS AND EGRESS OVER THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED REAL ESTATE. FROM THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SECTION 30, TOWN 7 SOUTH, RANGE 15 WEST, MEASURE EAST, ALONG THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID SECTION, 471.94 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE LAND HEREIN DESCRIBED, THENCE NORTH 18 DEGREES 49 MINUTES 31 SECONDS, 17.43 FEET, THENCE EAST, PARALLEL WITH THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID SECTION, 45.71 FEET TO THE EAST LINE OF THE WEST 15 ACRES OF THE WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST FRACTIONAL QUARTER OF SAID SECTION; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 13 MINUTES 35 SECONDS EAST, ALONG SAID WEST LINE, 16.50 FEET TO THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID SECTION; THENCE WEST, ALONG SAID SOUTH LINE, 51.40 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. Street Address: 66741 Conrad Road, Edwardsburg, Michigan 49112 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241(a) in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of the sale. If the property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCLA § 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. THIS FIRM IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION WE OBTAIN WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: IF YOU ARE A MILITARY SERVICE MEMBER ON ACTIVE DUTY, IF YOUR PERIOD OF ACTIVE DUTY HAS CONCLUDED LESS THAN 90 DAYS AGO, OR IF YOU HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO ACTIVE DUTY, PLEASE CONTACT THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PARTY FORECLOSING THE MORTGAGE AT THE TELEPHONE NUMBER STATED IN THIS NOTICE. Dated: April 18, 2026 For more information, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing: Robert A. Blumberg (P87490) Johnson, Blumberg & Associates LLC 30 North LaSalle St., Suite 3650 Chicago, Illinois, 60602 312.541.9710 - Phone 312.541.9711 - Fax File No.: MI 26 7142 (04-18)(05-09)

0900 LEGALS

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
CASS COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
2026-080-DE
Carol M. Bealor

Court address Court telephone no.
60296 M-62,
Cassopolis, MI 49031
(269) 445-4475

Estate of:
Johnathon Michael Jankoviak
Date of Birth: * August 2, 2011

TO ALL CREDITORS: **

NOTICE TO CREDITORS:
The decedent, Johnathon Michael Jankoviak, died 12/08/2025. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Mandy Jankoviak, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 60296 M-62, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date: 04/14/2026

Butzel Long
Josephine M. Parrinello P86619
Attorney name **Bar no.**
201 W. Big Beaver, Ste 1200
Address
Troy, MI 48084
City, state, zip
(248)858-1427
Telephone no.

Mandy Jankoviak
Personal representative
875 Wadaduga Lane
Address
Niles, MI 49120
City, state, zip
(574)309-1677
Telephone no.

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
CASS COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO.
2026-036 DE

Estate of Mary Ann Everman
Date of birth: 9/11/1937

TO ALL CREDITORS:

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Mary Ann Everman, died 5/31/2025. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Pamela Everman, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 60296 M-62, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date: 4/15/2026

Attorney Name:
Michael B. Walling, P55771
4625 Beckley Road, Bldg 400
Battle Creek, MI 49015
269-968-1101

Personal Representative:
Pamela Everman
61348 Barron Lake Rd
Niles, MI 49120
269-845-6517

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

RE: MORRIS A. KELSO AND JEWELL D. KELSO REVOCABLE [NOW IRREVOCABLE] TRUST DATED JULY 13, 1998 SUCCESSOR TRUSTEE: MARY ANN KIDMAN

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The Decedent and surviving Settlor of the above trust, JEWELL D. KELSO died January 17, 2026; the other Grantor, MORRIS D. KELSO died more than 3 years ago on October 27, 2010; both Grantors formerly resided at 60379 Dailey Road, Dowagiac, MI 49047, in LaGrange Township, Cass County, Michigan. Creditors of JEWELL D. KELSO, Deceased and the above trust are notified that all claims against JEWELL D. KELSO, individually and the above Trust will be forever barred unless presented to the Successor Trustee of the Trust and to Attorney James J. Mollison, whose respective addresses are listed below, within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

No probate estate is anticipated.

Date: April 25, 2026

Mary Ann Kidman, Successor Trustee,
of the Morris A. Kelso and Jewell D. Kelso Revocable [now Irrevocable] Trust
Dated July 13, 1998
57021 M-51 South
Dowagiac, MI 49047
C 269-845-8760

James J. Mollison [P17884]
Attorney for the Trust and Jewell D. Kelso, Deceased
4 South Lincoln Avenue
Niles, MI 49120
269-684-7600
C 269-930-4170

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EXHIBIT A
NOTICE OF INTENT TO ISSUE REVENUE BONDS
AND NOTICE OF RIGHT OF REFERENDUM
TO THE ELECTORS, RESIDENTS AND TAXPAYERS
OF THE VILLAGE OF CASSOPOLIS
AND CUSTOMERS AND USERS OF THE
VILLAGE'S WATER SUPPLY AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEM

TAKE NOTICE THAT the Village Council of the Village of Cassopolis, Cass County, Michigan (the "Village Council"), intends to authorize the issuance of NOT TO EXCEED NINE MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS ($9,500,000) Village of Cassopolis Water Supply and Sewage Disposal System Revenue Bonds (the "Bonds") pursuant to the Revenue Bond Act, Act 94, Public Acts of Michigan, 1933, as amended (the "Revenue Bond Act"), and/or the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Act 451, Public Acts of Michigan, 1994, as amended ("NREPA"), for the purpose of defraying all or a portion of the cost of certain improvements to the Village's water supply and sewage disposal system including, but not limited to: force main replacements, replacement and rehabilitation of manholes, and upgrades to lift stations (the "Project") and costs of issuing the bonds.

The Bonds will be payable solely or primarily from revenues derived from rates and charges received from users and customers of the Village's water supply and sewage disposal system and will be payable in not more than thirty (30) annual installments at a rate of interest to be determined upon sale of the Bonds, currently estimated at 2.0% per annum, payable on the unpaid principal balance from time to time remaining outstanding on the Bonds.

The total cost of the Project is estimated to not exceed $9,500,000, all or a portion of which cost is to be paid from the proceeds of the Bonds.

SOURCE OF FUNDING

The State of Michigan, through its Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, makes funds available for sewer system improvement projects at a below-market interest rate through a Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund administered through the Michigan Finance Authority. The Village will seek to finance all or a portion of the entire Project cost through bonds issued through said Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund.

Pursuant to the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund, there is a possibility that a portion of the principal amount of the proposed Bonds would be forgiven, and the Village would not be required to repay that portion of the Bonds. However, the State of Michigan, through its Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, has not provided the Village with any assurances at this time that it will be granted loan forgiveness for any portion of the Bonds' principal amount, so it is uncertain whether any principal amount of the proposed Bonds will be forgiven.

SOURCE OF PAYMENT OF BONDS

THE PRINCIPAL OF AND INTEREST ON THE BONDS shall be payable from the net revenues derived from the operation of the Village's water supply and sewage disposal system remaining after payment of operation and maintenance expenses. Said revenues consist of rates and charges for services, including connection fees, which rates and charges are required to be maintained and increased from time to time in order to provide sufficient revenues to meet expenses for operating and maintaining the water supply and sewage disposal system, anticipated principal of and interest on Bonds, and to provide reserves for payment thereof. A schedule of the rates and charges is on file in the office of the Village Clerk of the Village of Cassopolis, 121 N. Disbrow Street, Cassopolis, Michigan 49031.

ADDITIONAL SECURITY – FULL FAITH AND CREDIT PLEDGE

In the event that (1) the Bonds are sold to the Michigan Finance Authority, and/or (2) certain state or federal financing is received for the Project costs, the Village would be authorized pursuant to the Revenue Bond Act and/or NREPA to pledge, and may decide to pledge if necessary and/or advisable, its full faith and credit for the repayment of the Bonds. In this event, the Village would be authorized within its constitutional, statutory and charter tax rate limitations to levy such taxes or advance such funds from the general funds of the Village as may be necessary to prevent or cure any default in the repayment of the Bonds resulting from an insufficiency of revenues derived from the operation of the Village's water supply and sewage disposal system. Although it is not anticipated that the Village will ever be required to advance funds, the Village would, in the event of an advance, be entitled to be repaid from the next water supply and sewage disposal system revenues available after correction of any deficiency or default.

NOTICE OF RIGHT OF REFERENDUM

THIS NOTICE is given pursuant to the requirements of the Revenue Bond Act and NREPA. If within forty-five (45) days from the publication of this NOTICE OF INTENT to issue Bonds a PETITION signed by not less than TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE REGISTERED ELECTORS residing within the limits of the Village of Cassopolis shall have been filed with the Village Clerk requesting a REFERENDUM on the question of the issuance of the bonds, then the same shall not be issued until approved by the vote of the majority of the electors of the Village qualified to vote and voting thereon at a general or special election. The current number of registered electors in the Village is 1,650.

Further information regarding the Project and the Bonds described herein is available at the office of the Village Clerk of the Village of Cassopolis, 121 N. Disbrow Street, Cassopolis, Michigan 49031, phone (269) 445-8648.

Dated: April 13, 2026
Tonia Williams, Village Clerk
Village of Cassopolis

ATTACHMENT A
NOTICE OF INTENT TO ISSUE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BONDS TO THE ELECTORS, RESIDENTS, AND TAXPAYERS OF THE VILLAGE OF CASSOPOLIS AND NOTICE OF RIGHT OF REFERENDUM

TAKE NOTICE THAT the Village Council of the Village of Cassopolis, Cass County, Michigan (the "Village"), intends to authorize the issuance of NOT TO EXCEED Two Million Dollars ($2,000,000) Village of Cassopolis Capital Improvement Bonds (the "Bonds") pursuant to the Revised Municipal Finance Act, Act 34, Public Acts of Michigan, 2001, as amended, for the purpose of defraying all or a portion of the cost of constructing and improving certain utilities and infrastructure, including but not limited to, sanitary sewer and force main, sanitary lift stations, water main, and storm sewer, as well as constructing and improving roads, sidewalks, and parking lots, and performing site improvements and landscaping, as well as other necessary and related improvements, and engineering, architectural, legal, bond issuance and financing costs. The Bonds may be issued by the Village in one or more series, the aggregate principal amount of which will not exceed $2,000,000.

The Bonds, or any series of bonds, will be payable in not more than twenty (20) annual installments at an effective rate of interest to be determined upon sale the Bonds, payable on the unpaid principal balance from time to time remaining outstanding on the Bonds.

Any portion of the cost of the above-described project that will not be financed through the issuance of the Bonds will be paid for by the Village using available Village funds.

SOURCE OF PAYMENT OF BONDS

THE PRINCIPAL OF AND INTEREST ON THE BONDS will be payable primarily from general ad valorem taxes of the Village. In addition, the Bonds will be payable as a first budget obligation from the general funds of the Village and/or from ad valorem taxes dedicated to road improvements which must be levied by the Village as necessary to make such debt service payments, but subject to existing constitutional, statutory, and charter tax rate limitations. The full faith, credit and resources of the Village will be pledged for the payment of the principal of and interest on said Bonds, subject to applicable constitutional, statutory, and charter tax rate limitations.

NOTICE OF RIGHT OF REFERENDUM

THIS NOTICE is given pursuant to the requirements of Section 517 of the Revised Municipal Finance Act, Act 34, Public Acts of Michigan, 2001, as amended. If within forty-five (45) days from the publication of this NOTICE OF INTENT to issue Bonds a PETITION signed by not less than TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE REGISTERED ELECTORS residing within the limits of the Village of Cassopolis shall have been filed with the Village Clerk requesting a REFERENDUM on the question of the issuance of the Bonds, then the same shall not be issued until approved by the vote of the majority of the electors of the Village qualified to vote and voting thereon at a general or special election. The current number of registered electors in the Village is 1,650.

Further information regarding the proposed project and the Bonds described herein is available at the office of the Village Clerk of the Village of Cassopolis, Village Hall, 121 N. Disbrow Street, Cassopolis, Michigan 49031 (phone 269-445-8648).

Dated: April 13, 2026
TONIA WILLIAMS
Village Clerk
Village of Cassopolis

White Space Sells

Julio Cortez / AP

Notre Dame running back Jadarian Price (15) runs the 40-yard dash at the NFL combine in Indianapolis on Feb. 28.

Seahawks select Irish running back Price with No. 32 pick

By ANDREW DESTIN
Associated Press

SEATTLE — It took less than two months for the Super Bowl champion Seattle Seahawks to find a replacement for Kenneth Walker III.

The Seahawks selected Notre Dame running back Jadarian Price with the 32nd overall pick in the NFL draft Thursday night, addressing one of their top needs.

Price is expected to get opportunities with the starters from the jump, according to coach Mike Macdonald, and is eager to fill the void left by Walker, who after being named Super Bowl MVP left for the Kansas City Chiefs in free agency.

"(I'm) coming to the right offense," Price said. "An offense that prides itself on being balanced in running and throwing the ball. But just their emphasis on running the ball, first, and how important that is. You see Kenneth Walker III getting the Super Bowl MVP, I think it's important. And, I'm glad to be in this situation."

Price split time in the Fighting Irish's backfield last season with Jeremiyah Love, who was selected with the No. 3 overall pick by the Arizona Cardinals. In a part-time role, Price ran for 674 yards on 113 carries (6.0 yards per attempt) and a career-high 11 rushing touchdowns last season.

Price said a number of schools tried to get him to enter the transfer portal, but he instead stayed behind and reaped the benefits of sharing a backfield with Love.

"(I) split reps with the best player in college football," Price said. "I showed I can do it at the highest level. And sitting here now, it was the greatest decision I could have made."

The 5-foot-11, 203-pound Price is a downhill runner, though he can bounce carries to the outside to make good use of his speed and quickness.

President of football operations John Schneider was particularly impressed by Price's ability to cut carries back, as well as his character.

Price is fueled on the football field by his mother, Jessica Butler, who was diagnosed with cancer when Price was 17. Butler eventually recovered, and demonstrated to Price that no amount of adversity is insurmountable.

"I truly believe that in order to grow, you have to go through pain and adversity," Price said. "Watching my mom go through that, it made me believe there's nothing that could stop me getting to achieve my dreams. She went through the worst. So, what's one more bad day of adversity for me? I can always get through it."

Heading into the draft, Schneider said the Seahawks were open to trading their top pick since they only had four total selections. But from Schneider's perspective, Price was too tantalizing a package to pass on.

"Kind of stood alone. Great player," Schneider said. "The person is outstanding. The competitor. He's a Seahawk."

Bears add secondary help, draft Oregon safety Dillon Thieneman

By ANDREW SELIGMAN
Associated Press

LAKE FOREST, Ill. — There were a number of directions the Chicago Bears could have gone in the first round of the NFL draft. They opted to give their secondary a boost.

Chicago took a safety in the first round for the first time in 36 years when they selected Oregon's Dillon Thieneman with the No. 25 pick on Thursday night.

"He's a violent football player," general manager Ryan Poles said. "He strikes. There's a knock-back element to his tackling."

The Bears hadn't drafted a safety in the first round since 1990, when they took Marc Carrier with the No. 6 pick out of USC. Thieneman is the first defensive player taken in the first round by Chicago since linebacker Roquan Smith in 2018. He joins a team trying to build on a breakthrough year, after winning the NFC North in coach Ben Johnson's first season.

Chicago also has two second-rounders, a third-rounder, a fourth-rounder and two seventh-rounders.

The Bears lost their top four safeties, including three-time All-Pro Kevin Byard and Jaquan Brisker. They signed Coby Bryant, who helped Seattle win its second Super Bowl, to a three-year, $40 million contract, but still had an opening at that position.

Thieneman grew up near Indianapolis in Westfield, Indiana, and starred at Purdue for two years before transferring to Oregon last season. He earned first-team All-Big Ten honors and helped the Ducks go 13-2 while advancing to the College Football Playoff semifinals. He finished with 95 tackles and two interceptions, including the clinching pick in a double-overtime win at Penn State in late September.

The 6-foot, 201-pound Thieneman is known for his speed, versatility and ability to recognize what the other team is trying to do. He ran a 4.35-second 40-yard dash at the combine and can play both safety spots as well as nickelback.

"I feel like speed is very interesting because there's normal speed and then there's gameplan speed," Thieneman said. "So the more you can process and recognize, the faster you can play in-game closer to your speed."

Lions take Clemson offensive tackle Blake Miller with No. 17 draft pick

By LARRY LAGE
Associated Press

ALLEN PARK — The Detroit Lions found a replacement for a longtime fixture on the offensive line.

Detroit drafted Clemson offensive tackle Blake Miller with the No. 17 overall pick in the NFL draft on Thursday night, selecting a massive and durable player to make up for the loss of Taylor Decker.

"When you think about Blake Miller, you sleep easy," Lions general manager Brad Holmes said.

The 6-foot-7, 317-pound Miller started 54 games in college. The three-time All-ACC player broke a school record by playing 3,778 offensive snaps.

Miller, who is from Strongsville, Ohio, said he also did not sit out of a game in middle or high school football.

"If I'm able to play through injury or blessed enough to be completely healthy, I owe it to my teammates to be on the field," he said.

Clemson coach Dabo Swinney said Miller missed two practices in college.

"Blake Miller is one of one," Swinney said. "He is big. He's strong. He's athletic. He's a leader, and he's one of the most committed guys I've ever coached."

Holmes says he drafts the best players on the team's board, refusing to reach for needs.

Miller appears to be both a highly rated prospect and a player with a chance to play right away as a rookie for coach Dan Campbell after the team scouted him for three years.

"He has literally gotten better every single year and that's what makes you really excited about a player that has a high floor," Holmes said.

Decker asked for his release, ending a 10-year run as the team's starting left tackle, in a relatively surprising move after announcing he was coming back instead of retiring.

Penei Sewell will likely replace Decker on the left side. Detroit signed Larry Borom to possibly take Sewell's spot on the right side and now he has competition from a first-round pick for playing time.

Miller is looking forward to playing with Sewell, an All-Pro the previous three seasons.

"I've watched a lot of his tape," Miller said. "There's so much he does incredibly well. Just to be able to sit in the same room with him and on the same field, I can't wait."

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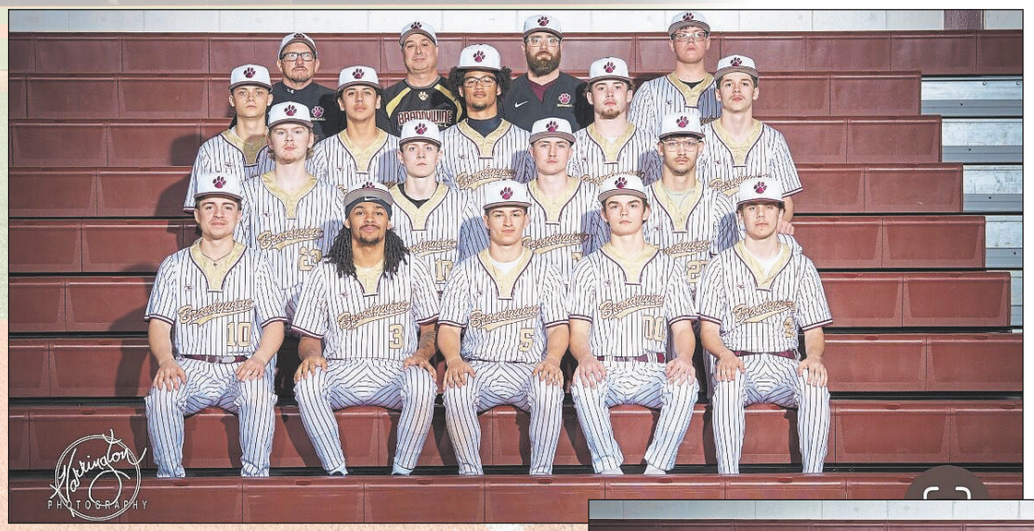
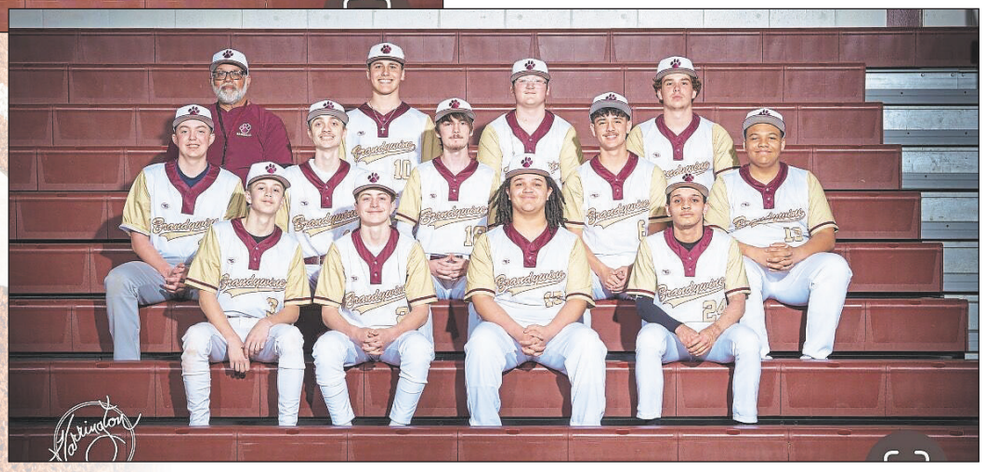
BASEBALL





Coach name: David Sidenbender

Career record: 491-298

Years at current school: 25

Last year's record and conference placement: 23-11-1(1st)

Key starters lost: Mason Simmons

Top newcomers: Parker Anglin, Bryce Hood, Malachi Gamble

Strengths: Pitching depth

Weaknesses: Inexperience at the middle inf positions

Team goals: Find our identity and be true to that as much as possible all season long.

SOFTBALL

Softball Coach: Michael Brumitt

Career record: 77-60

Years at current school: Six years

Last year's record and conference placement: 20-18-1. Third place

Key starters lost: Adelyn Drotoz, Paige Krisher

Top Newcomers: Hailey Smith, Taytum Richards

Strengths: We are coming in with a strong offense, and seasoned players on defense, especially with five seniors

Weaknesses: We are proceeding with out much depth

Team goals: We can't wait to compete and give our best run in the postseason

BOYS GOLF

Coach name: Max Douglass

Years at current school: in second year as head coach, 2 years assisting

Last year's record and conference placement: 23/42, third place

Key starters lost: We lost no starters last year

Top newcomers: mostly the same team as last year and very excited for these boys to perform this season.

Strengths: Ball striking and swing speeds

Weaknesses: Putting

Team goals: Conference championship

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TRACK & FIELD

Coaches Name: Terry Borr

Year At School: 36

Key Starters Lost

Girls: Miley Young, Olivia Lauri

Boys: Zach King

Top Returners

Girls: Karleigh Bird Lily Gill , Mackenna Price, Allison Kline, Emily Kline, Isabella Padron, Alison Murray all state qualifiers

Boys: Kaden Santana state qualifier, Elijhia Burt, Jase Serdel, Gabe Smith

Top Newcomers

Girls: Aubrey Burt 9 Grace Colbert 9 Zaya Price 9 Hailey Smith 9 Aiiyana Walker 9 Laila Wogatzke 9

Boys: Jonatan Gonzalez-Torres 9 Landon McGinnis 9 Wyatt Pelec 9 Fernando Soto 9 Jase Deming 11 Will Hubbard 11 Logan Swartz 11 Tyler Schoff 11 Lion Heindel 12 Lucas Kanagawa 12

Strengths:

Girls: A number of top performing returners that qualified for state the last two years. Should be good in the jumps, hurdles and sprint relays

Boys: A couple top jumpers returning and some new and returning throwers

Team goals: To return a number of kids to the state meet and have some state placers. Have everyone improve throughout the season.

GIRLS TENNIS

Coach name: Joe Marazita

Career record: 339-34-13

Years at current school: 35th year at Brandywine, 30th as girls head coach

Last year's record and conference placement: 11-2-1, second in conference and regional runner-up, finished 10th at State Finals

Key starters lost: Ireland Prenkert, Aubree Murray, all-state No. 1 doubles Ashlyn Kohler and Allie Curtis-Lee, Adeline Gill

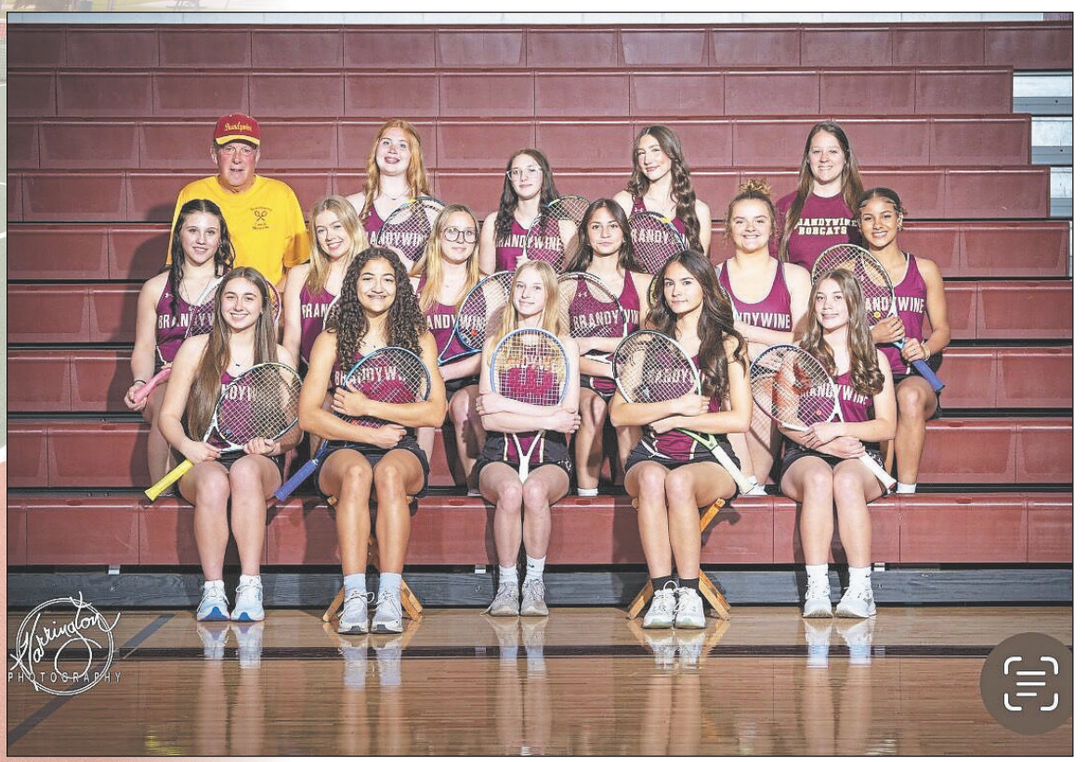
Top returning: Sydney Olson, Louisa Peterson, Chelsy Olson, Karleigh Byrd, Lilly Gill, Alison Murray, Holly Anderson, Khloe Vanderboegh, Khloe Austin, Aleyna Vollman

Newcomers: Makenzi Myer, Melody Livengood, Alaina Roberts, Caitlyn Marazita, Grace Colbert

Strengths: Experience at the top of our line-up and we are athletic.

Weaknesses: Quite a few kids have never played before.

Team goals: Always give 100 percent, be supportive of your teammates, play our best tennis at the end of the season and earn Academic All-State Honors as a team.



GIRLS SOCCER

Coach name: Caleb Adams

Career record: 19–81–6

Years at current school: Eight

Last year's record and conference placement: 4–13–1. Last place.

Key starters lost: Lexi Troup, Isabel Kelems, Dani Bunch, Taylor Swank, Bailey Bauer

Top newcomers: Janea Dehart, Aubrey Burt, Taryn Swank, Kelsea Brant

Strengths: Intelligent, high energy team

Weaknesses: Young and inexperienced

Team goals: Play a more complete game

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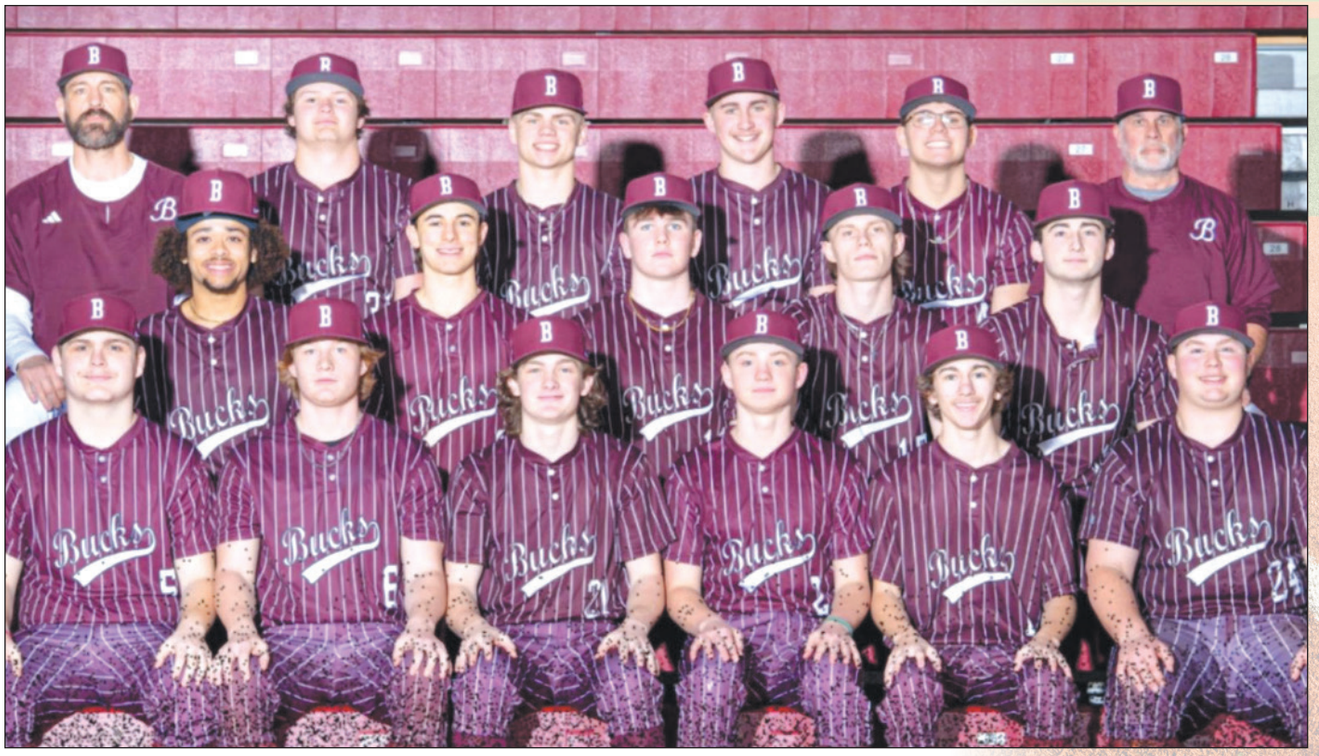


Head Coach: Keith Schreiber

Years coaching: First year

2025 record: 11-18

2025 conference record: 6-2, second place

Key starters lost: Tyler Baker, Jake Franklin, Connor Billington

Key returners: Lucas Zeiger, Holden Carrington, Brody Lange, Ari Johnson, Logan Edgerle, Marley Hinds

Top newcomers: Brayden Holt, Trey Teshka, Ethan Frame

Strengths: Athleticism, experience

Goals: Simply to be better everyday

SOFTBALL

Head Coach: Rachel Carlson (207-61)

Years coaching sport at current school: 21 years, eight as varsity coach

Last year's record/place in conference: 27-13, District Champions, Regional Champions, State Quarterfinalist

Key starters lost: 3x All State Outfielder Caitlyn Horvath; All State Infielder Cam Carlson

Key returning lettermen: All Region Catcher Aspen Berry; All Region Outfielder Cora Weinberg; All District Pitcher Haylee Legault; Lea Atkinson Outfielder

Strengths: Team work – ethic, team speed, aggressive hitters, and team positivity.

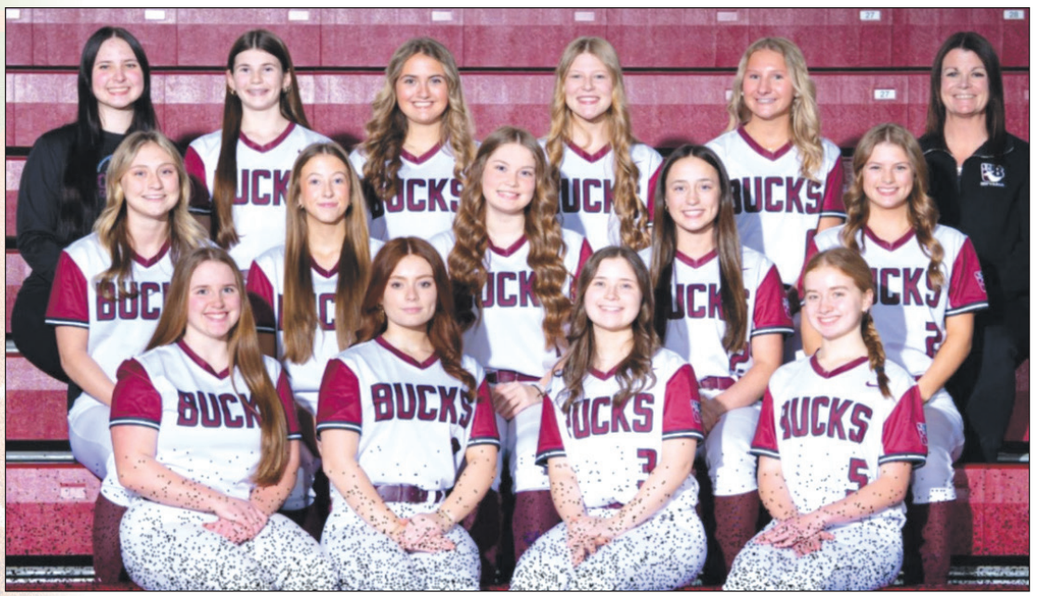
Weaknesses: Our newcomers have big shoes to fill and need to jump right into our tough schedule.

Other than winning all your games, division or conference championships and making the state playoffs, what other team goals do you set?

We want to work together as a team and make sure we support each other all the time. We have made goals to get better individually every day and work to make changes that help the team.

How do you think your players handle the highs and lows of winning and losing, and how do you coach that?

My players have been working hard to step into big roles at Buchanan after losing some key seniors and are ready for those challenges. We have the right mindset to play very tough competition and take challenges and adversity head on.



What has the team improved on most during the offseason?

We lost a pitcher and so we have worked hard to ready some new faces on the mound and have worked hard in the cage to better their swings so we can compete offensively as well.

BOYS GOLF

Coach name: Mike Beasley

Years at current school: First

Key starters lost: Carson Shelton

Top Newcomers: Riley Gamso, Jesse Baber

Strengths: Senior leadership

Team goals: Be competitive in all matches

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GIRLS TENNIS

Coach name: Erik Johansen

Career record: 39-12-4

Years at current school: Six

Key starters lost: Hana Yamagata, Kati Ferrell, Olivia Kutemeier, Laura Sweeney

Top Newcomers: Ava Sears, Addison Brown, Ava Brown

Strengths: Strong group of Singles players, No. 1 Doubles

Weaknesses: New doubles flights, learning how to play together and improving quickly

Team goals: Get better everyday, earn academic all-state again as a team, win regionals, qualify for state tournament for third time in four years

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TRACK & FIELD

Coach name: Kristin Baker

Assistant coaches: Emily Frontczack, Crystal Young, Kristin Baker, Josh Kuntz

Years at current school: Second year coaching track

Last year's record and conference placement: Conference Second place (however meet did not take place in real time boys and girls)

Key starters lost:

Girls: Maddie Young, Ava Graham, and Audrey Leitz,

Boys: All-State qualifiers have returned

Top newcomers: Girls: Tala Carlin, Lira Myers Boys: Derenik Lewis, Bently Molitor, Brody Reed, Austin Monory, Jordan Corbett

Boys team goals: Boys are focused on their placement in the region as they are working to be in contention for a Regional title. Qualifying athletes for the state meet as this team has several returning 2025 state qualifiers and upper classmen.

Girls team Goals: Girls are focused on being competitive in the conference, uplifting their teammates and having several qualifiers at the state meet.

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GIRLS SOCCER

Coach name: Russ Philip

Years coaching sport at current school: 10 years, eight as varsity

Last year's record and conference placement: 18-1-1 Conference Champs

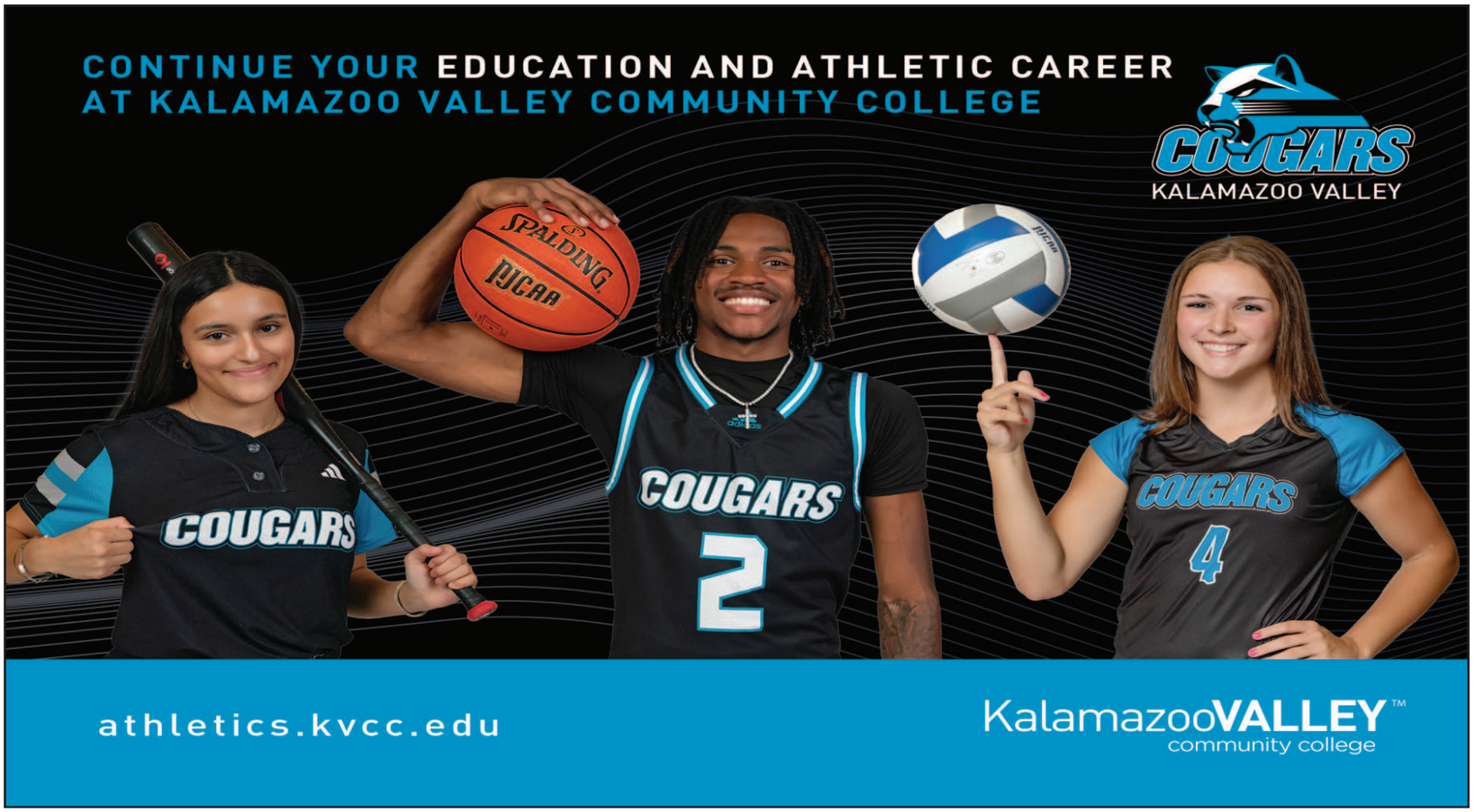
Key starters lost: We graduated 11 seniors including our 3-headed offensive monster (Belle Overmyer, Evyn Prutt and Sutherland Philip) that scored all but 7 of our goals.

Top Newcomers: Emily Hasse – is a returner, but she is very new in her role as keeper. Sophia Mason is also a newcomer in the back.

Strengths: Hardworking and eager to learn.

Weaknesses: We lost 11 seniors. We have 2 starters that returned so this is a rebuilding year.

Team goals: Stay positive. Improve every game. Stay competitive.



BASEBALL

Coach name: Nic Davis

Years at current school: Seven years

Last year's record and conference placement: 8-14, eighth place

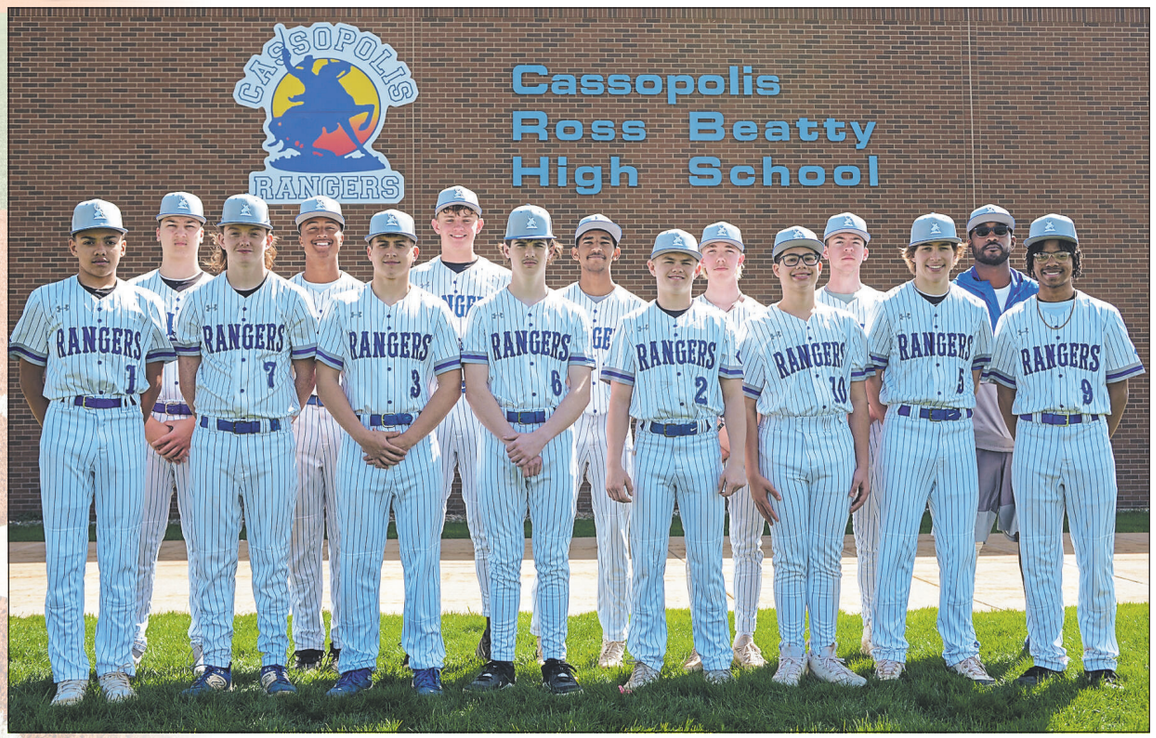
Key starters lost: Devyn Garcia, Gavin Anderson, Aiden McGrew, Gage Mitchell

Top Newcomers: Camdyn Gillam, Landon Leach

Strengths: This year, our Speed and Defense should really help us out. This is a very athletic group of young men.

Weaknesses: Unfortunately, experience is going to be one of our main weaknesses. We have 5 underclassmen joining the Varsity Baseball team this season.

Team goals: As a team, I am looking forward to all of the athletes gaining overall baseball knowledge, while being a competitive ball club. It is also a team goal, that we have a winning season.



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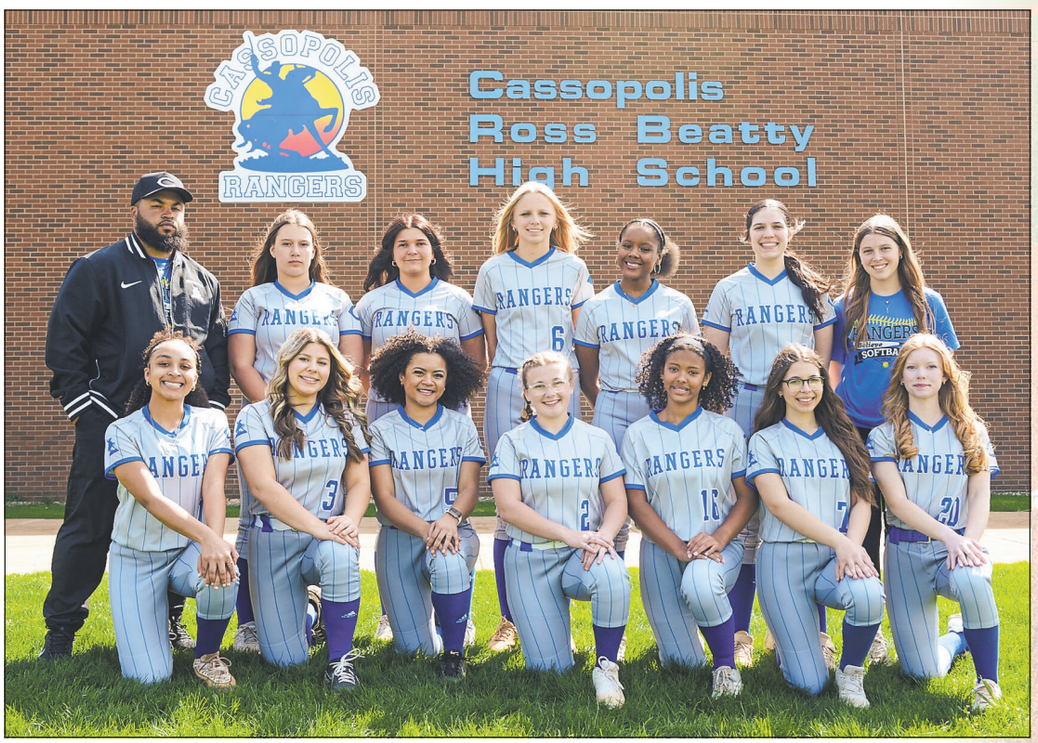

Coach name: DaShaun Curtis

Career record: 56-37

Years at current school: Six years

Last year's record and conference placement: Third

Key starters lost: Mackenzie Boyer, Janayla Franklin

Top Newcomers: Ella Smego, Avery Alford

Strengths: We are deeper in the pitching department. We also are better offensively

Weaknesses: I believe we are a young program with lack of experience.

Team goals: Goals for this year is to get closer as a team and minimize errors. We also need to learn how to turn a negative into a positive, and not stack up errors.

BOYS TRACK & FIELD

Coach: Tony Myrthil

Years coaching sport at current school: Four

Key starters lost: All our key starters are returning

Key returning lettermen: Aarenn Buck-Hooper, Jayce Brown, Nikolas Craig, Ethan Light, Trevon Peterson-Evans, Jaylen Pratt, Jameire Pratt, Cameron Steward

Top newcomers: Vince Anders, Jaymir Brown, Logan Burns, Landon Burns, Bryce Carter, Elijah Harrington, Riley Jones, Arden May, Tyler Nolen, Carti'Yea Warren, Jamarion Williams

Strengths: We have several state-qualifying athletes from last year returning: Aarenn Buck-Hooper, Nikko Craig, Jaylen Pratt, and Cam Steward. We will be strong in the High Jump, 100 m dash, 200 m dash, 4 x 100m relay, and the Long Jump. Our strengths center around having naturally talented athletes, and whatever we lack in talent, we make up for with hard work!

Weaknesses: Again, this year we are a young group. Also, we have some new guys starting in the sport.

Other than winning all your games, division or conference championships and making the state playoffs, what other team goals do you set?
To have our athletes excel as students, athletes, and ultimately productive members of society, and to always proudly represent Ross Beatty High School.

GIRLS TRACK & FIELD

Coach name: Brandon Anderson

Years at current school: Second year

Key starters lost: Lily Westrate

Top Newcomers: Ella Carlisle, Ashaiah Moses, Maya Walker, Lyla Smith

Strengths: We have more experience, we are competitive, and we are striving to get better each day!

Weaknesses: We are a very young team.

Team goals: To be competitive not just at meets, but in practice as well. We want to improve as the season goes on, and ultimately get some of these young ladies competing at the State Finals.

BOYS GOLF

Coach name: Joseph Westrate

Career record: 30-3

Years at current school: Sixth year overall, fifth as head coach

Last year's record and conference placement: 6-1

Key starters lost: No key starters lost

Top Newcomers: Brayden Ivens, Mason Boyer, MJ Conner, Liam Dominiak, Jayce Hoffman Strengths: I would say our experience on the course. We are a senior driven team with a lot of reps under our belt.

Weaknesses: There is always work to be done around the greens. We always need to improve with our short game… no matter how good it might be.

Team goals: Our goal is to win a sixth consecutive Southwest 10 Conference championship. This would break the previous record set in the late 80's early 90's at Cass. Cassopolis finished ninth overall at the Class D state championship in 2025. Our goal is to win the state championship in Class C this year.

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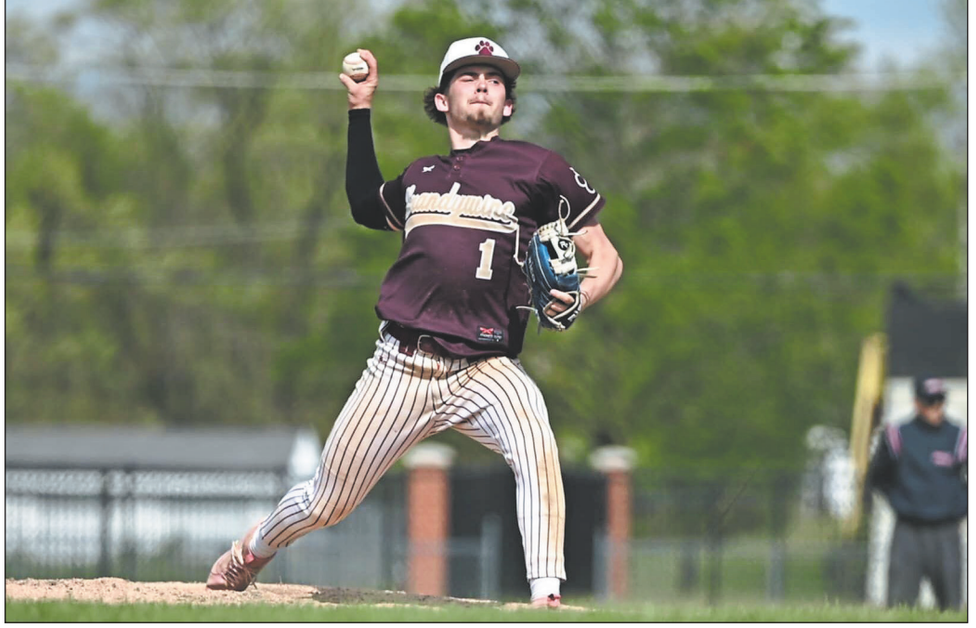

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TRACK & FIELD

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BASEBALL

Coach: Mark Nate

Years coaching sport at current school: First year

Last year's record/place in conference: 8-18, third in the conference

Key returning lettermen: Cole Wimberley, Caiden Freeman, Riley McCaffery, Aidan Voorhees

Top newcomers: Baylon Cooper, Jamere Bacon Baker, Tyler Feirick

Strengths: Coachability, Overall athleticism and eager to learn.

Weaknesses: Experience at the Varsity Level

Other than winning all your games, division or conference championships and making the state playoffs, what other team goals do you set?
To build a solid program and build team chemistry.

What has the team improved on most during the offseason?
Going back to the fundamentals.

What makes this year's team unique?
It is all new for everyone. The team is young and it's a whole new staff. It's exciting.

Front: Aidan Voorhees, Baylon Cooper, Will Sanders, A'shjionn Nickens, Dylan Valencia and Jamere Bacon Baker. Second Row: Coach Wheeler, Coach Joey Nate, Tyler Feirick, Cole Wimberley, Justin Feirick, Coach Ruddell, Coach Mark Nate and Coach John Nate. Back Row: Denton Grierson, Caiden Freeman, Riley McCaffery, Aiden Martin and Jackson Gillesby.

SOFTBALL

Front, from left: Charleigh Reed Lillian Bladecki-Cobb, Claire Hess, Olivia McIntosh and Madelynn Schaus. Back Row: Coach Behnke, Addison Wilson, Brianna Campbell, Marlie Carpenter, Emily Henry, Bryanna Behnke

Coach Name: Mike Behnke

Years coaching sport at current school: 22

Last year's record / place in conference: 30-4 overall, 1st in Lakeland Conference (8-0)

Key returning lettermen: Bree Behnke, Bree Campbell, Marlie Carpenter, Emily Henry, Claire Hess, Olivia McIntosh, Charleigh Reed, Addie Wilson

Top newcomers: Lillian Cobb, Madi Schaus

Strengths: Eight returning starters from last year's team

Weaknesses: Depth

Other than winning all your games, division or conference championships and making the state playoffs, what other goals do you set?
Being a good teammate and mental toughness

What has the team improved on most during the offseason?
Hitting

What makes this year's team unique?
We have eight returning starters from last year's team and seven from the last 2 years that have played a lot of softball together so it is time for the players to step up and take this team as far as its talent can take it.

BOYS GOLF

Front row, from left: Jeremiah Bond, Hunter Steinman, Emmett Roach, Kyler True and Liam Schau. Second row: Mason Green, Corbin Race, Keegan Franklin, Austin Hart and James Greene. Back Row: Coach Bob Turner, Levi Purins, Brady Frazier, Nikalus Hutchings, Mason Ausra, Coach Jason Turner.

Coach name: Bob Turner

Years coaching sport at current school: 13

Key returning lettermen: Jeremiah Bond, James Greene, Keegan Franklin, Hunter Steinman

Top newcomers: Mason Ausra, Emmett Roach, Austin Hart, Kyler True

Strengths: We are very young but have a willingness to try new approaches and work on improving our games. Jeremiah will set the bar and lead by example

Weaknesses: Very young and inexperienced we will improve throughout the season.

Other than winning all your games, division or conference championships and making the state playoffs, what other team goals do you set?

Number one, we always set Academic All State as a team goal.

Number two, we want to be better golfers at the end of the season than we are at the beginning.

Number three, we want to continue to know and learn the rules as good as any team out there.

What has the team improved on most during the off-season?

We have probably improved most on our ball striking and general knowledge of the game.

What makes this year's team unique?

We have the largest number of players we have had in quite a few years.

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GIRLS SOCCER

Coach name: Joey Pasternak

Years coaching sport at current school: Six as girls varsity coach

Last year's record/place in conference: 11-7-1, second place in conference

Key returning lettermen: Alivia Bell, Chloe Brewer, Chloe Friske, Mia Freeman,Maya Hernandez, Alex Jijun, Johannah McDonald, Airreana Morse, Riley O'Konski, Sabina Sanchez-Ortega, Jimena Sanchez-Ortega, Jealeah Schoff

Top newcomers: Gala Sanchez-Ortega, Valentina Mireles, Lucy Hughes

Strengths: Experience. We are returning every starter from last season. All will be in there third or fourth year on Varsity

Weaknesses: Focus. When we are focused this is a very good group, we tend to get lost and make mistakes that cost us games or make things more difficult than they should be.

Other than winning all your games, division or conference championships and making the state playoffs, what other team goals do you set?
Playing the game the right way every day. Whether it is in practice or a game staying consistent in everything we do.

What has the team improved on most during the offseason?
Ball movement and first touch

What makes this year's team unique?
Everyone is coming back. Not many times do you have a good team that returns everyone. We are also adding a few new players that will help to continue building a program not just a team year to year.

Front: Alexandra Jijon, Gala Sanchez Ortega, Valentina Mireles and Jaeleah Schoff. Second: Riley O'Konski, Jimena Sanchez Ortega, Sabina Sanchez Ortega, Maya Hernandez, Alivia Bell and Airreana Morse. Back: Coach Bell, Lucy Hughes, Chloe Brewer, Chloe Friske, Mia Freeman, Johanna McDonald and Coach Pasternak.

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GIRLS TENNIS

Coach: Tammi Spivey

Years coaching sport at current school: Seven I

Key returning lettermen: Hailey Spivey, Olivia Stockwell, Kai Kruger, Kendall Kroepel, Kylie Lynch, Makyah West, Chloe Samuel, Lily Lebeda

Top newcomers: Belinda Pavia-Morales, Tessa Miltroka, Charlie Spivey, Ja'Myla Bonds, Trynity Schoff

Strengths: Team Culture/Bonding, Positive Attitude, Communication

Weaknesses: Footwork, Consistency in Rallying, Net Play

Other than winning all your games, division or conference championships and making the state playoffs, what other team goals do you set?

The goals I set for the team would be to have clear focus and give your best effort in practices and matches. Don't lose hope and have a negative mindset. Stay positive and focus on proper form and follow through and have good sportsmanship.

What has the team improved on most during the offseason?

The team has improved most on commitment to improving and staying humble. They participated in the Lakeland Athletic club High School Group Tennis lessons during the Winter months. There were key takeaways from these and I was proud of them and how they improved their skills.

What makes this year's team unique?

These ladies have a positive attitude and amazing team culture! They have strong support for one another and have great encouragement among teammates.

Front, from left: Kylie Lynch, Rylan Miller, Lily Lebeda, Riley Huff and Chloe Samuel. Back Row: Coach Buynar, Isabella Hertter, Kendall Kroepel, Olivia Stockwell, Makyah West, Kai Kruger, Hailey Spivey, Coach Spivey

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TRACK & FIELD

Front row, from left: Angel Brito, Robert Wares, Cordell Smith, Mason Garcia, Carson Ake, Eli Edgerly and Axel Santiago. Second: Ethan Nearpass, Evan Hammond, Balois Franco, Domenic Seals, Orion Felps-Konscol, DJ Shivers, Landon Severance, Austin Rial and Jaden Hull. Third: Coach Williams, Dionte Calloway, Devin Maddron, Marcus Wares, Aaron Morgan, Isaiah Weatherspoon, Jaylin Medrano, Brody Brewer, Jeremiah Hargreaves and Zach Zietlow. Back: Devin Rock, Quentin Hill, Coach Clark, Coach Smith, Coach Love, Coach Hunt, Elias Garcia, Adam Smith

Front row, from left: Ella Richter, Ja'Leah Henderson, Vianet Hernandez, Sadie Bonczynski, Ah'Mya Lee and Khamari Mack. Second: Bailey Ottinger, Kamyrah Bennett, Shamyra Clark, Kamyrah Barhams, Tessa Deering, Rihanna Calloway, Skylie Johnson Larios. Back: Coach Clark, Coach Smith, Lanijiyah Moss, Nadia Poorman, Jocelyn Kiner, Coach Love, Coach Hunt, Coach Williams.

Coach name: Mike Williams

Years coaching sport at current school: 10

Last year's record/place in conference: Second in Conference

Key returning lettermen: Devin Rock, Isaiah Weatherspoon, Quentin Hill, Devin Maddron, Jaylin Medrano, Shamyra Clark, Sadie Bonczynski, Nadia Poorman, Tessa Deering, Jocelyn Kiner, Khamari Mack

Top newcomers: Marcus Wares, Aaron Morgan, Brody Brewer, DJ Shivers, Cordell Smith

Strengths: Strong Veteran group

Weaknesses: Filling some field events with Varsity Level athletes

Other than winning all your games, division or conference championships and making the state playoffs, what other team goals do you set?
To qualify more athletes for State.

What has the team improved on most during the offseason?
They have great attitudes, work ethic and are committed to ongoing growth.

What makes this year's team unique?
This senior group has helped set the expectations for track and field for our younger athletes.

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Area Athletes!

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BASEBALL

Coach name: Adam Castelucci

Career record: 17-13

Years at current school: 2

Last year's record and conference placement: 17-13 4th Wolverine Conference

Key starters lost: Brody Schimpa, Joe Lundgren

Top Newcomers: Logan Summy, Connor Fischer

Strengths: Pitching

Weaknesses: Young group. Still trying to build upperclassmen and fill in around our Junior class. Need to to a better job situational hitting and moving runners.

Team goals: Control how we prepare, compete, and respond. Hold each other accountable throughout the season and be in a position to play our best baseball at the end of the year.

SOFTBALL

Coach name: Ali Kozinski

Career record: Currently 3-1

Years at current school: First year

Last year's record and conference placement: I believe last year's team was 23-17 and 8-6 in conference play. I don't have information on where they placed last year in the conference.

Key starters lost: Mia Castelucci, Lani Harden, and Kourtney Zarycki were key starters on the team last year.

Top Newcomers: Top newcomer this year is freshman Olivia Jamison.

Strengths: Our strengths this year include having a veteran pitching staff (three seniors) and a great hitting team.

Weaknesses: We have some inexperienced fielders on defense this year that are getting better each day.

Team goals: Team goals for 2026 are to minimize errors on defense, be aggressive base runners, and to add another district championship.

BOYS GOLF

Head Coach: Jeff Kozinski, 1999-Present

Last year's conference finish: Third

Key starters lost: Ben Fish, Cody Schaap

Key Returners: Michael Wright, Maverick Gates, Joe Shively, Brandon VanOverberghe, Caleb Schaap

Strengths: Men worked hard in the off-season. This team is focused on competing. Michael Wright, Maverick Gates, and Joe Shively will be strong leaders on our team. They have worked hard on the off-season. We are looking for them to have another solid season. They have done a nice job of encouraging the younger players on the team. Other players to look at are Brandon VanOverberge and Caleb Schaap. Four of the five players are returning letterman.

Weaknesses: The tough weather will make it challenging in the opening rounds in conference play.

Team goals: We want to average 39's as a team.

Handling Highs and Lows: School sports are huge in building character. We will handle the highs and lows together working as a team. To coach highs and lows, it's important to put school sports into perspective. School sports give kids opportunities to be involved with others to build teamwork and character.

What has the team improved on most during the offseason?

Attitude is our biggest improvement. The players are very positive and they are great to be around. Their positive attitudes rub off on the underclassman. I'm expecting this to be a great season on and off the course. Four Lakes Country Club has been awesome for the young golfers in the community. The staff and the grounds crew have been very positive when working with the junior program. It's awesome to have such a great home course.

GIRLS TENNIS

Coach name: Erin Souchick

Years at current school: First year as varsity coach.

Key starters lost: 11 players graduated. One returning varsity player, Bella Hankins, playing No. 1 singles.

Top Newcomers: Mia Wright, freshman, playing 2 singles, Nathalie Dufour, senior, and Greta Day, sophomore, playing 1 doubles, and Jenna Pederson, senior, and Kendyll Wallace, junior, playing 2 doubles.

Strengths: Hard work, lots of heart and willingness to push themselves, strong fundamentals.

Weaknesses: Team is young, very young. Inexperience is going to be our toughest thing to overcome.

Team goals: Play hard, see growth and improvement every time we play, have fun, and support each other.

BOYS TRACK & FIELD

Coach Name: Lito Ramirez

Career Record: 9-5

Years at School: Three

Last year's record: 4-3, sixth at the conference meet

Key Starters Lost: Maguire Johnson, Cole Claire, Jon Leith

Top Newcomers: Ethan Haas, Landon Boomershine

Top returning letter winners: Zach Overmyer senior returning state champion in the high jump, Mobius Stubblefield senior all-state 400 meters, Lucas Frentz junior conference champion Pole Vault, George Scupham senior state qualifier 4x800, Jack Bell senior 400 meters injured last season was part of 2024 regional champion 4x400 relay team.

Strengths: High Jump and Distance Events

Weaknesses: Throws Events

Our top kids are very anxious and excited about their chances for this season. They will certainly help in creating a successful winning attitude for the entire team.

Team Goals: We expect to be very competitive at the conference and state level. With a very strong senior class, our expectations are very high. As always, our conference and regional opponents are very strong. Dual meets and regionals will come down to which teams stay healthy.

GIRLS TRACK & FIELD

Coach name: Morgan O'Grady

Years at current school: Two

Last year's record and conference placement: Our Conference record last year was 4-3, and we ended up 4th in the Wolverine Conference (out of 8 teams).

Key starters lost: We did not lose a lot of seniors from last year.

Top Newcomers: Finley Eull, Riley Petruska , Brynlee Landis, Grace Leman, Lydia Mahon, McKenna Smoker

Strengths: We have some great returning players, we have Sarah Pippin ~ High Jump (State Qualifier) ; Georgia Babcock ~ distance (State Qualifier) ; Mady Peat ~ Pole Vault (State qualifier); Sarina Mora – Hurdles & Long Jump (was 5th in Indoor State for Triple Jump); Cassidy Frentz – Long Jump; Kennedy Goorhouse & Caliana Manfred ~ sprints; Grace Leman – Distance.

Weaknesses: We are lacking in the throwing department, we need some ladies shot put and discus throwers.

Team goals: My expectations for this season are centered on continued growth, commitment, and competing at a high level. We have a strong group of returning athletes along with several new team members, and I'm excited about the potential this group has. My goal is for our athletes to continue improving their individual performances while also contributing to a supportive and competitive team environment.

GIRLS SOCCER

Coach name: Sean Jesse

Career record: 36-54-4

Years at current school: 15, nine as varsity coach

Last year's record and conference placement: 4-13-0, 2-5-0 (sixth overall)

Key starters lost: Malai Szalai - graduation

Top Newcomers: Senior Shaylin Tinkham, sophomore Marissa Heiser, junior Kya Shier, junior Shelby Laubach

Strengths: Willingness to work hard, grit and determination, desire to get better, great leadership

Weaknesses: Depth, finishing in the final (attacking) third.

Team goals: Be at least 1 percent better every day, Academic All-State, Playing our best soccer come tournament time

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BASEBALL

Coach name: Jim Brawley

Years at current school: Fourth year at Niles

Last year's record and conference placement: 26-7-1, First place Wolverine Conference

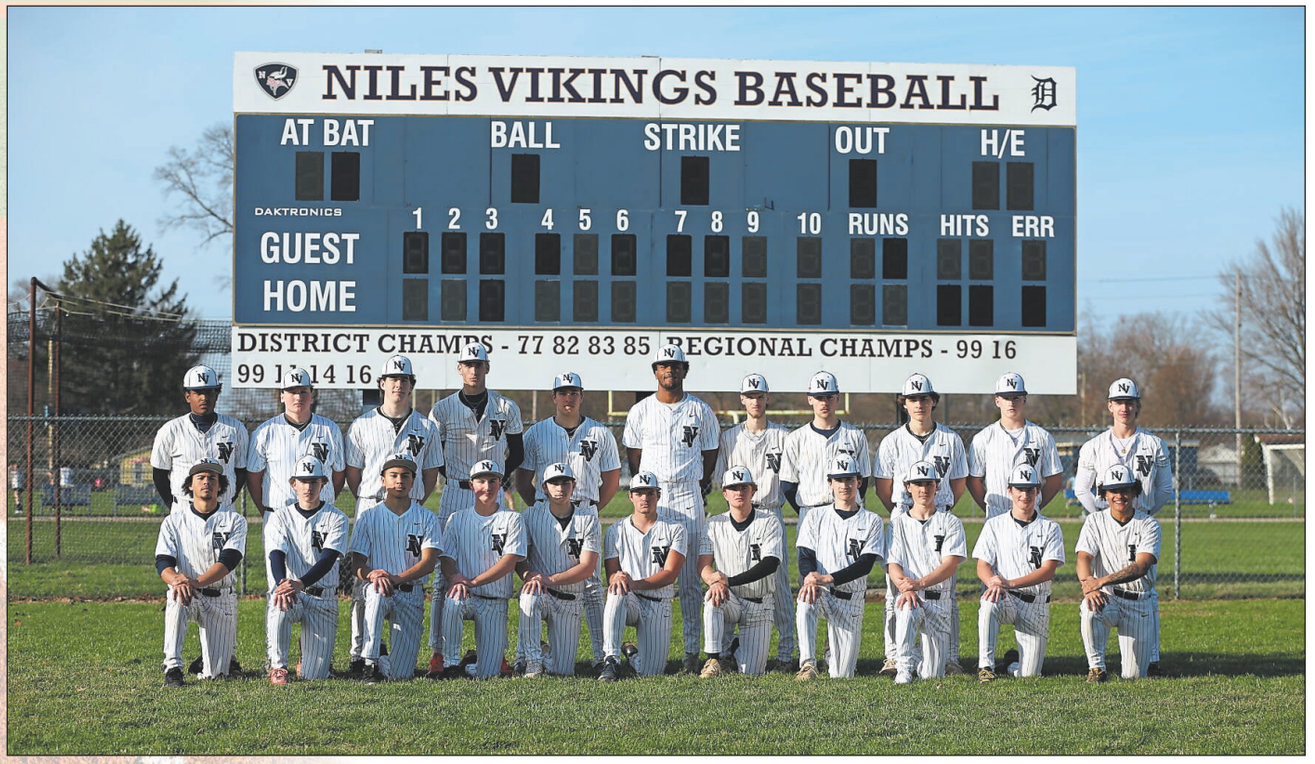
Key starters lost: Josh McIntyre, Dane Asmus, Braylon Schultz, Sam Rucker

Top Newcomers: NA – all returnees

Strengths: Depth, pitching, defense

Weaknesses: We strike out too much, need to stay healthy

Team goals: Every player reaches his potential



SOFTBALL

Coach name: Jenna Podjan

Career record: 0-0

Years at current school: First year

Last year's record and conference placement: NA

Key starters lost: NA

Top Newcomers: We have Austyn Rohacs and Madi Knight coming in as solid freshman in the corner positions, both have great IQ and swing the bat well. We have also been fortunate with a Junior transfer in Alliayah Kirschbaum, in the middle infield. She is something special in the field and at the plate.

Strengths: Our Infield is solid, Adeline Johnson and Kirschbaum in the middle are very sound, reliable and get the job done. We have key leaders with the battery in Morgan Clanton as our senior pitcher and Mckenna Albright as our senior catcher. They have a special relationship, and I see high hopes for them to lead a young team.

Weaknesses: We are a new program, finding a new culture with a fairly young team.

Team goal: Our goal is to compete for a top spot in the conference, compete for a district championship and begin the return of glory to Niles softball. We have a lot to work on; Rome was not built in a day, but those are the goals we talk about with our team. And we work hard each and every day to get one step closer to those goals.

BOYS GOLF

Coach name: Dan Brawley

Years at current school: 19 years

Last year's record and conference placement: Fourth in the conference

Key starters lost: Owen Podlin

Top Newcomers: Max Rucker, Dillon Pearman, Brandon Walsh and Cobi Marlin

Strengths: We will be expecting Gavyn Luke, Landon Martin, and Blake Hopper to carry the team this year, all three of them have three years of Varsity experience and they are all solid golfers.

Weaknesses: We are still looking for consistency out of our 3, 4, and 5 players. Although our top 3 are solid we will need to take one additional score for conference and regional play.

Team goals: Our goal is to get better throughout the year, have strong mental attitudes and to rise in pressure situations. Like always we would like to bring the Scott Novak Cup back in the hands of the Niles Vikings.

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GIRLS TENNIS

Head Coach: Jill Weber

Years at current school: 25+ years at Niles.

Key starters lost: Aubrey McIntosh, Emma Williams

Key returning varsity players: Cheyenne Small, Hailee Mitchell, Addison Van-Dalsen, Brooklyn Hemminger, Scarlet Thalman, Donna Babler, Azlynne Ingle, Norah Rogers, Kennedy Holloway, Bella Ledesma

Key newcomers: Bella Castillo, Mia Abarca

Strengths: Our strengths for sure start with our experience. Our mindset is strong giving attention to every moment as we practice and compete. We have a very positive and connected team.

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GIRLS SOCCER

Coach name: Jaycee Myer

Career record: 20-30-4

Years at current school: This is my fourth season

Last year's record and conference placement: 6-10-2, sixth in conference

Key starters lost: Kelsea Slater, Kaiya Slater, Jazmin Sosa, Alexis Garlanger

Top Newcomers: Avril Shier, Elynne Hoyt, Mena Hover, Lena Colsten, Maleah Crowley,

Strengths: We have a lot of returners that work well together. We know how each other plays.

Weaknesses: Team goals: To play as a team, work hard, and win.

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BOYS TRACK & FIELD

Coach name: Joseph “Tony” Todd

Years at current school: 29

Last year’s record and conference placement: Sixth

Key starters lost: Aydan McCarey

Top Newcomers: None

Weaknesses: Youth

Team goals: Building

GIRLS TRACK & FIELD

Coach: Coach Rikki Jones

Years coaching sport at current school: 10th year as head coach of women’s track and field, fourth year at Niles

Key athletes lost: Izabel Hoskin, Kylie Conn, Bree Lake, Lizzy Coffee

Key returning lettermen: Anastasia Kopczynski, Katie Walsh, Loryana Harris, Alysha Boyne, Anna Smith, Isabelle Sullivan, Alaska Buckhanan, Jennifer Loniello

Top newcomers: Aubrey Burger, Zarrah Dyer, Alani Scott

Strengths: We are looking forward to seeing where our strengths are this season. With the loss of our seniors, we will have areas to fill in the sprints. We have some new faces that will bring new talent, it is just a learning curve to find where they can be most successful. Our newcomers will help fill spots in the jumps, sprints, and distance, but our main strength will be to persevere because we are not a large team, but we will be putting in the work no matter what to achieve both our team and personal goals.

Weaknesses: Our main weakness will be and always has been our depth. With so many women’s spring sports, we compete to get athletes out for track and field. This is our challenge each and every season.

Team goals: Honestly, we don’t focus on winning the dual meets as a team goal. If we grab a win, that’s a bonus, but it is not our focus. We really try to instill in our athletes to not only compete with other athletes, but also compete with themselves. Watching our athletes achieve their personal best is the most rewarding thing to see as a coach. It is not always about being THE best, but the best THEY can be.

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